

The Wisdom of the East Series

Vol. 44

EDITED BY

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ANCIENT INDIAN FABLES AND
STORIES

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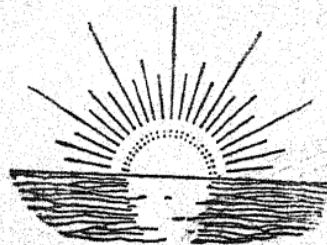
WISDOM OF THE EAST

ANCIENT INDIAN FABLES AND STORIES

BEING A SELECTION FROM THE
PANCHATANTRA

BY STANLEY RICE
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P R E F A C E

OUT of the mass of speculative and philosophical literature which India has bequeathed to us, three groups stand out by reason of their artistic merit. Though founded upon the sagas which professional minstrels sang in praise of the king, the Epics when they fell under Brahman influence became great vehicles of dogmatic and ethical teaching ; their heroes are the gods of India to-day, and they themselves form, as it were, part of the religion. The Dramas of the Gupta period, the Golden Age of India, were, like the Greek tragedies, a means of religious instruction to the people, and the Fables, if not strictly religious, were primarily intended to present moral doctrine in palatable form. It was advisedly said, therefore, that these three groups stand out inasmuch as they too should be classed as religious and moral literature, although to us to-day their charm lies chiefly in their artistic form, in their humanity, and in the pictures which they give us of the life of long ago in India.

Of these didactic fables the Panchatantra is the oldest if not the most famous collection.

It is certain that the form in which we now have it is not the original form ; the work consisted not of five books as at present, but of eleven, twelve, or thirteen, the probability being in favour of the middle number. Some of these books have disappeared and others have been absorbed, chiefly into the first book. The title "Panchatantra" (the Five Sections) would therefore have been wholly inapplicable to the original form of the work, so that it is plausibly conjectured that the original title may have been "A Handbook for Princes" or something of the kind. The ancient Indians paid considerable attention to political instruction. We find it scattered over the Mahabhbára, where perhaps the most notable example is the conversation of Yudhistira with the dying Bhishma ; but since the Mahabhbára itself, like the Panchatantra, is the result of many changes by accretion and modification, and since our knowledge of the time when and the manner in which these changes were brought about is so imperfect, it is impossible to say at what period the idea of political instruction first came into prominence. It was, in fact, another phase of that religious and moral instruction of which the Epics are full. Herr Benfey considers it certain that the original form of the Panchatantra was not a mere collection of fables, but was a treatise of "niti" or "correct behaviour," served up for popular con-

sumption in the guise of fables. The internal evidence points in the same direction. Not only does the introduction tell us in fictional form the motive of the whole collection, but throughout the stories the characters, whether animals or men, support the particular point which they wish to make by long strings of aphorisms often more or less tautological, and even their reflections are full of them. It is easy to see that these aphorisms were the real object of the work, the fable being regarded as merely the vehicle. It has only been possible to include a very few of them within the limits of this selection.

The author of the Panchatantra is not known. Vishnu Sarma, who tells the stories to the princes, may have been a real man and the author of the book ; but this seems to be a mere guess, for there is neither internal nor external evidence to support the conjecture. The date is almost as obscure as the name of the author. As has happened in the case of so many Oriental works, we have no certain data to guide us, and the habit of tampering with an original work by addition, variation, and subtraction diminishes the value of the internal evidence in helping us to arrive at any definite conclusion. The Buddhistic origin of many of the stories and fables shows that much at any rate of the material belongs to some date considerably later than 600 B.C. Again, by

A.D. 500 its fame had spread beyond the limits of India, as we shall presently see. On the other hand, there are various indications of Greek influence, and Herr Benfey traces a considerable number of the fables to *Æsop*. And since Greek influence was not felt in India until after the invasion of Alexander, it is conjectured that the *Panchatantra* is probably not older than the second century B.C. The reasoning is not conclusive, for we know very little of *Æsop*, and his fables in their present form are comparatively late. Moreover, it is quite possible that the influence was the other way, and that *Æsop* was indebted to India, for "the East, the land of myth and legend, is the natural home of the fable. . . . From Hindustan the Sanskrit fables passed to China, Tibet, and Persia, and they must have reached Greece at a very early age" (*Encyc. Brit.*, Art. "Fable"). The *Panchatantra*, however, continued to undergo alterations until the fifth century A.D., for there is in one tale a mention of Varahamihira, an astronomer who is known to have written about the time when the work was first imported into Persia.

In one form or another it has been translated into numerous languages—Arabic, Persian, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, German, Italian, and of course the Indian vernaculars. The translations into modern European languages are, as one might expect, the work of scholars whose object

has been to reproduce the wisdom of the East upon the best evidence available according to the canons of scientific criticism ; but curiously enough, though there are translations of the *Hitopadesa*, a later imitation of the *Panchatantra*, such as that of Sir William Jones, there does not seem to be any really authentic English translation of the whole work at all comparable to those of the German scholar Benfey and the French savant Lancereau. Indeed, a search in the British Museum and in the India Office libraries has failed to discover any English translation whatsoever.

The earliest known Eastern translation is a Pehlevi work which is thought to have come nearer to the original than any other now extant. The author is said to have been one Buzur Kimr, who flourished in the court of Khusru the Great of Persia in the sixth century A.D. The work was undertaken as part of a project to translate into Persian the best products of Eastern and Western philosophy, including Plato and Aristotle. Unfortunately this work is lost. But in the eighth century Abdullah Ibn al Muqaffa translated it into Arabic in the form of the well-known *Kalila and Dimnah*, corruptions through the Pehlevi of the names of the jackals, Karataka and Damanaka, in the Sanskrit work. There is also a Greek version by one Simeon Seth of Antioch in the eleventh century, and a Hebrew

translation of the *Kalila and Dimnah* by a certain Joel, whose name alone has survived, and from this version it was again translated into execrable Latin by Giovanni di Capua. The ancient Indian work thus became known in Europe through these channels and influenced the work of Boccaccio, La Fontaine, and even Ariosto, though as Sanskrit was little, if at all, known until a much later date, these writers were quite ignorant of the original source from which they drew their inspiration. Indeed, few even to-day realise that the story of Arriguccio Berlinghieri and Sismonda his wife in the Seventh Day of the *Decameron* owes its conception to one of the stories of the *Panchatantra*, though the incidents have been altered to suit Italian taste. The object of these early translations was thus quite different from the object of modern scholars, for the earlier patrons of literature sincerely wished to disseminate the work for its moral precepts, and did not regard it merely as an interesting fragment of antiquity.

It must not be supposed that the ethical teaching is of a very high order. The book is "The Mirror of Princes." As an Italian writer, Signor Pizzi, has said, "It speaks of duty; but it would be absurd to search in it for the lofty idea of duty which Cicero had when he wrote the *Offices*." The morality which Vishnu Sarma teaches is more or less confined to the arts of

government ; his object is to instruct the princes in what may well seem to us the *elements* of political wisdom, to inculcate what is expedient rather than what is virtuous. Thus in the main fable of the Owls and the Crows, which is the groundwork of the third book, the lesson to be learned is to distrust one who is a natural enemy until by every means possible you have tested his sincerity ; but at the same time the spy crow is evidently held up as an example of sagacity from whom we are equally entitled to draw the inference that it is not only legitimate but praiseworthy to get the better of an enemy by treachery. Or, again, the fable of the Brahman and the Crab does not teach the virtue of kindness to the weak, but rather the prudence of never despising an instrument, however humble, which may turn to our advantage. Nevertheless, to quote Signor Pizzi again, the work is composed "with plenty of good sense, with acute observation and knowledge of life and of the human heart."

Although the animals behave more or less after their kind, the conception of their societies is anthropomorphic. The lion has his court and appoints his ministers, the crocodile has his home to which he invites his guests, and the owls meet together to elect a king. It has been suggested that this characteristic may be referred to the Hindu doctrine of transmigration, but it seems to be universal, for the choice of beasts

as the characters even in the most primitive fables of savage tribes is thought to be not unconnected with the same doctrine. Taine says, "La fable, par nature, cache toujours un homme dans une bête. C'est par des qualités humaines qu'elle peint les animaux." But certain characteristics are already appropriated to particular animals. The lion is always the king of beasts against whom none but the elephant dare stand, and this is remarkable, because in an Indian book one would have expected the tiger instead. But according to Professor Berriedale Keith, the tiger is not mentioned in the Rig-Veda, "which gives the place of honour among wild beasts to the lion, then doubtless common in the vast deserts to the east of the Lower Sutlej and the Indus, and even now to be found in the wooded country to the south of Gujerat." This suggests that the original material from which the fables took shape came from the north-western parts of India, but there are so many accretions that it would not be safe to build any theory upon this single fact. The lion is generally a foolish personage, easily influenced by his jackal ministers, who, like their counterpart the fox, have already earned a reputation for a certain low cunning. The crocodile is the embodiment of wickedness and could hardly have escaped the stigma. The cat, as in La Fontaine, is a pious hypocrite.

It is difficult to decide which of the many versions of the Panchatantra should be chosen for presentation to the English reader. As has been seen, not one of them can claim to be the original ; each has reacted upon the others, now introducing this feature, now interpolating that fable, or again altering the order of the stories. Herr Benfey, the leading authority, remarks that it is extremely likely that the popular version in the south of India is based upon a version which, at any rate to some extent, is older than the Sanskrit editions now extant. For geographical reasons the South was far less exposed to outside influence than the other parts of India. It was only at a comparatively late date that the invasions so common in the North touched her at all, and even now the most characteristic system of Hinduism is to be found in the South. There the great majority of the people are Hindu untouched by Moslem influence. It is in the South, too, that some at least of the purest specimens of ancient Hindu architecture are to be found, and it is there that, according to their own boast, the purest system of Hindu music flourishes. The southern version has therefore been adopted ; it is, however, not pretended that it is free from admixture and interpolation. It has, for example, been suggested that the introduction itself has been expanded from the original ; and it is an open question, at present to be decided only by

reasoned conjecture, how far the order of the fables, the interpolation of some, the omission of others, and the relegation of yet others to other parts of the work, ought to be accepted in this as in other versions. But the limits of this small work forbid any attempt at what may properly be called translation ; the object is to furnish the reader with specimens of the Indian fables which will enable him to form a fair opinion of their general character and of the peculiar genius of the Indian fabulist. On the whole, therefore, it seemed best to adhere to one version, and that, for the reasons already given, the one which is least likely to have been exposed to foreign influences and hence the most characteristically Hindu.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	17
FIRST TANTRA	21
SECOND TANTRA	81
THIRD TANTRA	86
FOURTH TANTRA	105
FIFTH TANTRA	115
ENVOR	125

EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the Editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West—the old world of Thought and the new of Action. In this endeavour, and in their own sphere, they are but followers of the highest example in the land. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour.

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ANCIENT INDIAN FABLES AND STORIES

THE PANCHATANTRA

INTRODUCTION

ONCE upon a time there lived in the town of Patalipuram a certain king called Suka Darusha, whose chief minister was Amara Sati. This king was renowned for his virtue and his good government, but unfortunately his three sons were equally noted for their vices. They were intractable, ill-natured, and profligate; their ignorance was a byword and their manners were gross; everyone avoided them and they spent their time in gambling, hunting, and debauchery.

The king was greatly distressed at the incorrigible conduct of his sons. Many a time did he confer earnestly with his minister on the subject. "Would to God," he cried, "that I had had no children rather than these unworthy sons." The minister, too, sympathised with his master, and recommended that he should

call together all the Brahmans in the kingdom in the hope that someone could be found to undertake the reformation of these abandoned princes.

Accordingly the Brahmans were called, and the king explained to them his anxieties, imploring them as gods upon earth to whom nothing was impossible to come to his assistance in return for the many benefits he had conferred upon them. But the Brahmans were silent. At last they replied, "O king, the thing you ask of us is beyond our power. We cannot change the character of those whom Nature has made stupid and vicious. Ask of us any kind of miracle: we will produce oil from dry sand; we will raise the dead; we will bring water from the river in a roll of wool without spilling a drop, and make horns to grow on a hare. But we cannot change the character of a vicious man."

Enraged at this answer, the king threatened to take away all their lands and revenues, to deprive them of all their privileges, and to expel them from the kingdom. But one among them, Vishnu Sarma by name, seeing with alarm that the king was thoroughly angry, besought him to moderate his rage, for he would himself undertake the task of educating the princes. He hoped that if the king would grant him six months' time he would be able to show a great improvement and that the princes would become worthy of their high station.

The king was overjoyed. He presented Vishnu Sarma with the *saptanga*, that is, with jewels of gold and silver, with costly silks, fine linen, a palanquin, a house, and betel, and calling the princes entrusted them to his care.

When Vishnu Sarma reached his house, all the Brahmans abused him for having undertaken such an impossible task. But Vishnu Sarma protested that he was not actuated by presumption, but only by a desire to serve them all, for he trembled to think of the king's wrath and of its consequences to their caste. He pointed out that if he had not yet removed the danger, he had at least delayed it for six months, and what unexpected turns of fortune might not happen in that time ? Chance and Fate might intervene to bring his undertaking to a successful conclusion. "In the difficult course of life," he said, "it is always something to gain time; and in the interval who knows but that some accident may turn to our advantage what threatened to cause our ruin ? "

He then told them several fables in support of his contention, and when he had finished, all the Brahmans were lost in admiration of his skill and of his wisdom. They realised that in thus playing for time Vishnu Sarma had really been serving their best interests, and also that such prudence as he had shown augured well for his experiment. In taking leave of him they

20 ANCIENT INDIAN FABLES

wished him every success in reforming his pupils ; while Vishnu Sarma for his part began to think out his scheme, judging that it was best to present the great moral lessons in the form of apologetics which should be both instructive and amusing.

FIRST TANTRA

VISHNU SARMA began by studying the character of his pupils. He kept a watchful eye upon them and never allowed them out of his sight. One day when the princes were out hunting with him, and had exhausted themselves in their usual manner by the immoderate slaughter of animals of all kinds, they all sat down together to rest under a shady tree. While they were thus taking their ease, the eldest of them asked their teacher to beguile the time by telling them some amusing story. Whereupon Vishnu Sarma, delighted to be thus forestalled, eagerly seized upon so favourable an opportunity and, true to his plan of combining instruction with amusement, began as follows :

THE DIVIDING OF FRIENDS

A merchant, by name Dana-Nahika, who lived in the town of Kantavati, had undertaken a long journey to buy rare and costly merchandise for his business and took with him a number of oxen to carry the goods he had bought. As he was passing through a forest, one of his best oxen,

called Sanjivaka, had the misfortune to catch his foot in some stones, and in his struggles he sprained his leg. The merchant, choosing the lesser of two evils, preferred to abandon the bull rather than delay his journey, and accordingly left him in the forest and went on his way. The bull thus abandoned began at first to pine, but by degrees the fresh grass and pure water of the forest restored him and he soon grew fat and strong and thought no more of his accident.

Now, in the neighbourhood there lived a lion ; he was king of the jungle and lorded it over all the animals who lived round about. His ministers were two jackals, Karataka and Damanaka, who, chancing to be insolent to their master, had been ignominiously expelled and forbidden to appear again at court. At this time they were living in the forest in disgrace. One day the lion-king, exhausted by the heat of the sun, went down to the river Jumna to drink, and was about to return to the palace when he was startled by a terrific sound. It was the lowing of Sanjivaka. Whence, he thought, could come this sudden and startling noise, and what kind of animal could emit such a sound ? Evidently one both bold and powerful. Was it a rival who had come to dispute the lordship of the forest ? Consumed by anxiety and not knowing what to do, the king bethought him of his ministers, and very soon sent them a message inviting them to his presence.

When Karataka and Damanaka had received the message and had guessed what had prompted the recall, they were unwilling to obey the command until they had carefully considered the probable consequences. "The king," they said, "is recalling us because he is in difficulties and is alarmed for his own safety." "And," added Damanaka, "before we commit ourselves let us see if what we propose to do is likely to be to our advantage or to injure us. We will not decide till we have weighed all the chances."

"You are right," replied Karataka; "one should never act without reflection, otherwise one runs the risk of the same fate that overtook the monkey. You shall hear."

A certain merchant called Gupta was building a temple on the banks of the Seraba. One day the carpenters at work there were splitting one of the biggest logs, but went away without finishing the work, leaving the log half split; they had, however, taken care to insert a wedge to keep the two sides apart. By and by came a troop of monkeys to look for food and to play, and one of the more thoughtless jumped upon the half-split log and began to run up and down it. But in jumping about the silly fellow knocked the wedge which held the parts asunder. The wedge fell out; the log closed; and so the poor monkey was caught by the back and crushed.

"The story of your monkey convinces me how dangerous it is not to reflect," said Damanaka ; "but now consider the risks they run who tell the truth to kings and devote themselves to serve them."

In the town of Ujjain there was a certain king called Darma-Dala, who dug a large pond and waited impatiently until it should be full of water so that he might use it for the purpose he intended ; but he waited in vain, because there was an invisible hole in the middle which communicated with a subterranean channel and all the water was drained off, so that the pond remained dry. Naturally the prince who had dug the pond at great expense was annoyed at the waste of money ; but a certain anchorite who lived close by, hearing of the king's difficulties and disappointment, came before him and told him that the pond was enchanted by some jealous men ; the only way to break the spell and to fill the pond was to sacrifice a Rajput, or failing that an anchorite. The king was delighted with this advice, and having no one else at hand to sacrifice, took the very anchorite who had given it, sacrificed him on the bank of the pond, and threw the body into the middle of it. The body happened to fall on the hole which drained the water and fitted it so exactly that the water ceased to escape, the pond was soon filled,

and the country round became fertile and productive.

Karataka had listened attentively ; he remained in thought for a while, and then broke silence. " However wary these instances and these arguments may make us, I think we shall do well to return to the lion. After all, since we left his service we have become the object of public contempt and are living in obscurity and misery. As soon as we are restored to favour, everyone will be anxious to do us honour ; and not to mention the respect and dignity in which we shall live, we shall be able to help our relatives and friends, to give alms to the poor, to assist the oppressed, and to do all kinds of good deeds. Don't we see every day some dog or other running from place to place for the sake of some poor morsel, fawning upon his master, wagging his tail, and glad of any scraps that come his way ? Don't we see the elephant forgetting his natural pride, becoming docile to man and submitting to him for the same reason ? Why then, seeing how wretched we are, should we hesitate to enter the king's service again ? "

To these remarks Damanaka returned the old saw : " Theft, horse-taming, heaped-up riches, anger, magic, and the service of princes nearly always lead to ruin."

" So," he said, " all things considered, I prefer

not to return. If you like, you can go alone ; I shall not go with you."

" You are wrong," replied Karataka : " in such an important matter we must act together if we are to succeed, otherwise we shall be ruined ; if we separate, we shall share the fate of the bird with two beaks."

Once upon a time there lived in a certain jungle a bird with two beaks. One day it perched upon a mango tree and was enjoying the delicious fruit, using one of its beaks to pluck and eat it. The other beak was jealous, and complained to its fellow that it never stopped eating and gave it no chance of enjoying the fruit in its turn. But the beak which was at work said, " Why complain ? What does it matter whether you or I eat the fruit, since between us there is only one stomach to feed ? " But the jealous beak, angry that the other would not give him a chance, resolved upon vengeance. He thought the best plan was to eat a grain of one of the most poisonous herbs in the neighbourhood. This he did, and the bird immediately died.

It was the disagreement of the two beaks which caused their ruin : wherever there is disunion, there is misfortune. Besides, don't you remember the proverb ?—" Never travel alone, and never appear before the king without support."

" Would you like some more instances of the

advantage of keeping together and helping one another as circumstances arise ? Listen, then."

Once upon a time there lived in the town of Somapuri a Brahman called Kala Sarma. He had long been in extreme poverty when he suddenly found himself by a happy chance raised to a condition of great fortune, and he resolved to go on pilgrimage to the Ganges to bathe in the river and to wash away his sins. He made ready for the journey and set out. One day, when passing through a forest, he drew near to the river Saraswati and went to bathe as usual. No sooner had he entered the water than a crab came up and asked where he was going. "To the Ganges," he replied, "on pilgrimage." "Ah!" said the crab, "I am tired of staying so long in this uncongenial place. Do me a service ; carry me to another place where I can live more at my ease. Be certain I shall not be ungrateful ; all my life I shall remember it. And if ever I get the chance, who knows but I may be able to help you in turn ? "

The Brahman was surprised. "How," he asked, "could such an insignificant creature as you ever be of service to a man and him a Brahman ? " "I will tell you," answered the crab.

In the city called Prabhavati there once lived a king called Aditya Varma. One day, when he was

out hunting with a numerous suite in the midst of a dense jungle, he saw coming towards him an enormous elephant, the very sight of which struck terror into the others. But the king reassured them and told them that he intended to capture the elephant and take him to the royal palace. All then set to work to effect the capture ; they dug a great ditch and covered it with leaves and branches. They then surrounded the elephant, leaving open only the way that led to the ditch, into which the elephant duly fell as he tried to escape.

Pleased with his success, the king told his men that before trying to extricate the beast they had better let him starve for eight days ; he would then lose strength and could easily be mastered. So he and his men withdrew, leaving the elephant in the pit.

Two days later a Brahman who was going along the banks of the Jumna passed by the spot and, seeing the elephant in the ditch, came up and asked him how the accident had happened. The elephant told his sad story and implored him to help him out of his distress. The Brahman answered that he could not extricate such a huge mass, but the elephant persisted and besought him to suggest some means of recovering his liberty. "I can see but one hope," said the Brahman : "if you have ever helped anyone, now is the time to call him to your assistance."

The elephant reflected. "I don't remember," he said, "that I ever did anyone a service except the rats, and that came about in this way :

"One year when King Suvarna Bahu was on the throne, the Kalinga country was invaded by an enormous army of rats which devoured every green thing and spread desolation everywhere. The people went in a body to implore the king to devise some means of freeing the country from these pests and from the havoc they wrought. So the king collected all the hunters in the kingdom, and with a large number of nets and other snares he made war upon the rats. By patience and hard work they were all forced out of their holes, and when they were all caught they were put alive into great earthen jars, there to die of starvation.

"While the rats were thus confined, I happened to go to the place. The chief of the rats, hearing me pass, besought me to have pity upon them all and to save their lives. 'That can easily be done,' he said, 'by breaking the pots with a single blow of your foot.' I pitied the poor rats, broke the pots, and set them free. The chief of the rats was very grateful and thanked me heartily ; he said he would remember the service I had done them, and promised to help me in turn should I ever be in difficulties."

"Well," said the Brahman, "since you helped the rats so signally, call them now ; doubtless

they will save you as you saved them." And wishing him a happy escape, he went on his way.

Left thus to himself, the elephant thought that he could not do better than follow the advice. So he called the chief rat to come to his assistance. Thereupon the rat came at once and found his benefactor in the pit. As soon as the elephant saw the rat, he told him all his misfortunes present and to come and implored him to release him somehow from his prison. "My lord elephant," said the rat, "that is no great matter for me; have courage, and I promise that you will soon be free."

So he called a huge army of his subjects, and taking them to the pit, set them to work to scratch all round so as to fill it up. By degrees the elephant was lifted until he was able to get out, and so owed his escape to the rats whom he himself had saved.

Having told this story to the pilgrim the crab added :

"If a rat could thus get the chance of saving the life of an elephant, might there not be an occasion for me to repay the benefit I ask of you ? "

Kala Sarma had pondered over all that the crab had said. Wondering at the intelligence of such a mean and despicable creature, he no

longer hesitated, but put him in his bag and went on his way.

The way led through a dense forest, and about midday when the sun was hottest he stopped to rest in the shade of a spreading tree. He was soon sound asleep, and then that which the crab had predicted came to pass. For under the tree by which Kala Sarma was so peacefully sleeping a huge snake had taken up his abode in a mound thrown up by white ants, and a crow had built his nest in the branches above. The snake and the crow, being neighbours, had struck up an alliance, and when any tired traveller came to rest in the shade of the tree, the crow used to warn the snake by a prearranged cry. Then the snake would creep out and bite the victim. The poison was so deadly that it killed instantly, and the crow and his friends would devour the corpse to their hearts' content.

No sooner had the crow seen Kala Sarma fast asleep than he gave the signal, and the snake, creeping out, bit the Brahman and killed him. The crows then flocked as usual to the place and alighted about the corpse. Meanwhile, the chief of the crows, seeing something move in the traveller's bag, put his head inside to see what it was. He was instantly seized by the crab, who, holding him by the neck, squeezed him to the point of suffocation. The crow begged for mercy, but the crab would not let him go until

he had promised to restore the life of the Brahman. The crow was at the mercy of the crab ; there was no help for it. He called his friends, explained the situation, and implored them to tell the snake of his danger and to get him to revive the Brahman. Thereupon the other crows hurried to the snake, who went up to the dead man and, applying his mouth to the bite, sucked out the poison and restored him.

As soon as the Brahman came to, he looked about him and was astonished to find the crab strangling a crow between his nippers. The crab told him what had passed. Of course the Brahman, who fancied that he had just waked out of a sweet sleep, was amazed to hear the story, "but," he said, "since the crow has kept his word, you must also keep yours and let him go." The crab, who wanted to punish the sinner according to his deserts but feared to do so while the snake was near, told the Brahman that he would let the crow go when they had gone a little distance from the place. So the Brahman put the two of them into his bag, carried them some way, and again pressed the crab to keep his promise.

"Fool," replied he, "is there any faith to be kept with the wicked, and can one trust their promises ? Don't you know that the crow has already caused the death of many innocent folk, and that if I let him go as you bid me, he will cause the death of a great many more ? Let me

tell you what honest men get from helping the wicked and what kind of reward is the due of the latter."

On the banks of the Jumna there is a Brahman village or agraharam called Agnistalam. In this village there lived a Brahman who wanted to make a pilgrimage to the Ganges. Astika, such was his name, accordingly set out, and one day when he went to the river for his usual bath, he had hardly entered the water before a crocodile came up and asked whence he came and whither he was bound. When he heard that the Brahman was going on pilgrimage to Kasi,¹ he at once begged him to carry him to the banks of the Ganges, where he hoped to be more comfortable, for when his present abode ran dry in the hot weather he suffered cruelly. Astika in pity put the crocodile in his bag, hoisted him on his shoulders, and went on.

When they reached the Ganges, the Brahman opened the bag and told the crocodile that he was free to enter the water; but the crocodile said that he was so exhausted by the journey of many days in the heat of the sun that he could hardly drag himself to the river and asked to be carried a little farther. Suspecting nothing, the Brahman consented and put him in the shallow water, whereupon the crocodile seized him by

¹ Benares.

the leg and tried to drag him under. Terrified and at the same time furious at such treachery, the Brahman exclaimed, "Villain! is it thus that you return evil for good? Is this the kind of virtue you practise? Is this the gratitude that I am to expect for the good I did you?"

"What," replied the crocodile, "do you mean by virtue and gratitude? Virtue and gratitude are to-day to devour those who feed us and do us good."

"At any rate, desist from your wickedness for a while," said the Brahman, "and we will see if others will approve these principles. Let us call in arbitrators, and if we can find three to approve, I will agree that you shall devour me."

The crocodile assented. They went first to a mango tree which grew on the bank, and the Brahman asked him if it was lawful to return evil for good. "I do not know whether it is lawful or not," answered the mango; "but I do know that that is exactly how men behave to me—men just like you. I satisfy their hunger with my fruit; I keep off the sun with my cool branches; but when these services cease through old age or accident, they forget all that I did for them in the past, lop off my branches, and finally uproot me. Whence I gather that virtue as understood by men is to destroy those who nourish them."

Then the disputants went to an old cow which was grazing alone on the bank and put the same question. "Don't talk to me of virtue," said the cow. "Virtue to-day is to devour those who sustain you, as I know only too well by unhappy experience. I have done good service to man: I have ploughed his fields, given him calves, yielded him my milk; and now that I am old he casts me off and leaves me to be the prey of wild beasts."

The fate of the Brahman now hung upon the decision of the third judge. The disputants called a jackal whom they saw, and the Brahman again put the same question. Before replying the jackal asked for the details of the dispute, and when he had heard the story burst out laughing and seemed at first to favour the crocodile. "However," he said, "before giving my decision, I should like to see how you managed the journey together." So the unsuspecting crocodile got into the bag, and the Brahman then showed how he had carried his opponent to the place.

While the crocodile was in the bag, the jackal told the Brahman to follow with his load and led the way to a solitary spot at some distance from the river. There he made him put down the bag and with a big stone he crushed the crocodile's head. "Fool!" he said to the Brahman, "have you not learned wisdom from your danger?"

and don't you know that you should never become friendly with the wicked ? ”

The jackal then collected his kith and kin and they all had a good meal off the dead crocodile ; and the Brahman, having finished his pilgrimage, returned to his village without further adventures.

When the crab had finished his tale, he said, “ Now you can see that there is neither bargain to be made nor faith to be kept with the wicked, and that when they are in your power, they must be destroyed without mercy.” So saying, he gave the crow a final nip and strangled him.

Then the Brahman, thus delivered from great danger, took the crab with him and at length reached the Ganges, where he set him free ; and thanking him warmly for the service he had done him, he made his ceremonial ablutions and returned to his country.

The story ended, Karataka said, “ You see how wise it is to act together and to help one another through life. Let us think no more of separating, but let us go together to the court of the lion that we may support one another.”

Persuaded by these arguments, Damanaka agreed to accompany him and to share the good or evil that might befall. They set out at once and presented themselves humbly before the lion. But before he told them the cause of his anxiety,

the lion made them promise to keep it secret and to swear that they would not betray him and would forget the injuries which they might have received from him.

The jackals accordingly swore that they would consider his interests their own, and the lion then told them his tale of the terrible sound like thunder which he had heard some days before and of his lively fear lest an animal which could make such a noise might be some rival come to dispute the lordship of the jungle.

Karataka and Damanaka guessed that this fearsome rival was only a bull; they tried to soothe their master, telling him that he had nothing to fear, that his equal in strength and courage was not to be found, and that whatever might be the animal whom he had heard but never seen, his fears were unworthy of him since in all probability there was no real danger. Karataka also tried to make him see how absurd was his fear and to restore his courage by the following tale :

In the north country two kings, chancing to meet when hunting in the same forest, fell out about a boar which they both claimed. The quarrel became so violent that it ended in a bloody battle in which many men and horses were killed and the two parties drew off with equal losses. When they had gone, a number of

jackals came up to the scene of the fight and found plenty of meat on which to gorge themselves.

While they were quietly devouring the corpses, a sudden wind sprang up which broke branches, uprooted trees, and raised such a cloud of dust as produced general havoc. The jackals, frightened lest the kings might have returned for a second battle, ran away for shelter into the depths of the forest. There they remained for some days, not daring to come out. But at last, driven by hunger, the bolder spirits ventured out and, finding nothing in the forest to harm them, realised that it was only the wind that had frightened them.

"Say what you like," replied the lion, "you will never convince me that an ordinary beast could produce such a terrible noise as that which I have heard. Such a horrible roaring could only proceed from some extraordinary and irresistible monster. I must give up the kingdom of the jungle and go and live somewhere in safety from such rivals. One of our proverbs says: 'Flee from the wicked; avoid the perverse; eschew the friendship of corrupt villagers, and depart from a kingdom where there are two kings.'"

"What is your plan then, Sir Lion?" they asked. "Another of our proverbs says: 'Never leave the land of your birth.' Give up any

idea of going away ; we are sure that your terror is imaginary and that the object of it is only 'Indra's charger.' However, the better to satisfy you, we will go and find this terrible beast. We will find out his intentions, and if he really is what you think, we will persuade him to peace and alliance with you."

The lion approved and despatched the ministers to the so-called rival to begin negotiations ; he gave them full power to make the best terms possible, and told them to make haste and to come back soon.

The two ministers accordingly departed, and after searching for a while found Sanjivaka in a corner of the jungle, grazing quietly beside the Jumna. Approaching him, they asked who he was, whence he came, and why he had come. Sanjivaka told them how he had been abandoned by his master in that vast jungle. On hearing this, the jackals looked at one another and burst out laughing. "So this is the terrible monster," they said, "whose voice has so frightened the lion. How could a beast so bold and strong have been so terrified by a poor old bull cast adrift by everyone ? "

Then they reflected : "After all, why should we undeceive the lion ? Why not pretend to share his alarm and tell him that it is well founded? Possibly his fears will turn to our advantage ; at any rate, we will persuade him that he cannot

do without us." They then returned to the lion and said dejectedly, "O my lord king, we have talked to your rival and we must unfortunately admit that your fear is not altogether groundless. This beast is no other than the charger of Siva, and says that Siva himself has sent him to the forest to devour every animal great or small."

The lion's fears were greatly increased by this report and his voice betrayed what was passing in his mind. "What did I tell you?" he said. "Had I not cause to be alarmed? Was I wrong in thinking that the beast who was able to make such a terrifying noise must be more powerful than I, a rival who had come to wrest from me the sovereignty of the jungle?"

Karataka and Damanaka were delighted to find that their trick was successful and that their report had increased the king's fears. But they made a show of soothing him by telling him that they had already arranged matters with the bull, that they were in hopes of inducing him to be friendly, and even of bringing him to court as a faithful ally of the king.

They easily obtained permission to return to Sanjivaka to settle the terms of peace; so they went again to find the solitary bull, and coming up with a truculent air they told him that the jungle where he had chosen to take up his abode was the kingdom of a lion and that he had better

find another abode if he did not wish to run the risk of being devoured.

You may imagine the surprise of poor Sanjivaka. "My lords," he cried, "where do you want me to go? I am abandoned by the whole world; I am poor, wretched, and worn out by old age and infirmity; what harm am I doing here? I live quietly in a corner of the jungle and am hurting nobody. Where can I go? If the lion wants to eat me, let him eat me; I would rather die by one blow of his paw than drag out such a miserable existence."

"Well," they replied, "if you are so miserable, at least you should conduct yourself with humility; how can a wretch like you be so brazen as to make the horrible noise you make? One would think you imagined yourself master here. What do you mean by such threats? Everyone is afraid of your bellowings; no one has ever heard the like. Even the king is full of surprise and anger at your threats and your horrible cries; he can hardly believe that anyone in his domains has the audacity to make such a noise. But King Lion is generous, and we will try to get him to show you mercy and to let you live in peace; but take care to speak lower and more humbly than you do. Remember the saying: 'Sweet breezes rejoice Nature; the storm scatters terror and desolation.' We will introduce you to the king, for, you know, 'For a wedding and the

favour of kings seek the help of others.' We know of course that you are bigger and stronger than we are. But there are certain affairs better managed by the weakness of the weak than by the strength of the strong."

On the top of Mount Meru there grew a mango tree which produced most luscious fruit. A lion passing by the tree wanted to taste the fruit, but the branches were too high, and in spite of his efforts he could not reach them. While he was struggling to do so, a crow perched on the tree and plucking the best fruit at her leisure was quickly satisfied, so that the lion, after waiting for a long time in vain, was obliged to go away, ashamed that he could not do what a crow had so easily done.

This said, the two jackals induced Sanjivaka to go with them to the lion. The bull, nothing doubting, went accordingly, and when they were near the royal den they told him to wait while they announced him to their master. They then went to the lion to report the success of their mission and began to enlarge upon their services. The Bull King whom they had brought, they said, was naturally of an angry, distrustful, and obstinate disposition ; they had had the greatest difficulty in persuading him to live in peace on a good understanding with his Majesty, but by dint of good management and promises they had

at last secured him as a faithful ally and a true friend.

The lion was overjoyed at their success, showered praises upon them, and commended their zeal and their fidelity to his interests.

Next day the jackals went back to Sanjivaka and took him to the lion, and the latter, wishing to receive his new ally with fitting dignity, was seated on his throne surrounded by the grandees of his court.

When Sanjivaka was presented, the lion looked at him for some time in silence and admiration. He thought himself lucky to have secured, through the good offices of his ministers, an ally who looked so strong and who had such powerful weapons of offence and defence. He at once led him to the inner part of the palace and delegated to him a share of the royal power, for he congratulated himself that, now that he had gained such a powerful friend, he would have nothing to fear and could continue to reign in peace and safety.

The lion and the Sanjivaka were soon living in close accord, and each found the other so charming that they were hardly ever separated and the lion only went hunting when he was very hungry.

Karataka and Damanaka soon realised their mistake in bringing Sanjivaka to court. "Since the king has met this bull," they said, "he is

always about with his new friend and even forgets his own needs. He hardly ever goes hunting, and when he does kills only enough for himself. He has quite forgotten us and we are left to perish. By bringing Sanjivaka to court we have worked our own ruin. We did not reflect and our imprudence is like that of the sanyasi" :

At some distance from the Kaveri in the south there lies an agraharam called Dharmapuri where lived a Brahman by name Deva Sarma. When he grew old he turned ascetic, but at the same time did not renounce the things of this world as he ought to have done, for he was exceedingly avaricious. He allowed this vice of avarice to get the better of him, and having amassed a goodly sum of money, he put it for greater safety into the hollow staff of the ascetic, so that he might always have it with him.

Another Brahman, who had heard how the ascetic lived, resolved to steal the money. He therefore began by coming to him with a humble air and pretended that he was very anxious to be his servant. The false Brahman anticipated all his wants and so succeeded gradually in gaining his confidence. He did him all kinds of service and amused him in his leisure hours with music which he performed excellently upon the kinara.¹

¹ A two-stringed instrument, one string of which is always free.

The ascetic counted himself lucky to have such a clever fellow for a servant, and entrusted him with everything except the stick which held the money.

One day the ascetic went out with his servant to collect alms in the neighbourhood, and when they were halfway back to the hermitage, the servant, who had purposely put a straw in his turban, ran quickly to his master and exclaimed in perturbation, "Ah! sir, I have committed a great crime and have only just discovered it. In the house where we dined to-day a straw fell on my turban and I never noticed it. What shall I do to expiate such a theft?"

"It was done in ignorance," replied the ascetic; "you are not to blame."

"But, sir, poison is poison whether you take it wittingly or unwittingly, and the results are fatal just the same. You really must tell me how to expiate the sin of stealing this straw."

The ascetic admired his servant's scruple and told him that since he was so scrupulous he should atone for his fault if it was one by plunging fully dressed into the water. The Brahman obeyed at once and in order to complete his purification he prostrated himself three times at his master's feet and asked his blessing.

Imagine how surprised the ascetic was to find such simplicity and such good faith. "What a servant I have!" he cried—"how honest! how scrupulous! Where can I find the like?" From

that time on he trusted him entirely, but in spite of all would not give him the stick with the money in it.

That was not enough for the servant. Dis-satisfied with the result of his first trick, he set himself to devise another. One day while talking to his master he made some remarks on the brevity of human life and on the frailty of this world's goods, and suggested a pilgrimage to the sacred Ganges to bathe in the waters and to obtain pardon for sin and the certainty of the joys of Satyaloka. He calculated that on such a long journey something would happen to give him the chance of stealing the treasure.

After much hesitation the sanyasi yielded to his importunity and they set out for Kasi together. Passing one day by the Ratravati, the sanyasi went to bathe. Unsuspectingly he entrusted the precious stick to his servant, of whose honesty he had no doubt, entered the water, and crossed to the other side. While he was bathing and praying, turning his head from time to time to keep an eye on the servant, he was suddenly startled by the following sight :

Two rams passing along the bank fell to fighting, and they used their horns to such purpose that the head of one of them was soon covered with blood. A jackal who saw the fight and the blood pouring from the ram's head went up, seized him and sucked the blood. But the fall

of the vanquished had not abated the rage of his adversary, and he paid no attention to the jackal who had fastened on his enemy's head. He charged again and crushed the head of the greedy jackal, who fell dead.

The ascetic had been absorbed in the fight ; he finished his bath, came out of the water, and returned to the bank. But what was his surprise and dismay to find that the servant had vanished, and with him the precious stick which held his fortune. Imagine the lamentations of the miserly sanyasi. "Alas ! " he cried, " I know now the meaning of the saying : ' There is nothing more seductive and nothing more deceptive than riches. To acquire is suffering, to keep is suffering, to spend is suffering, and to lose is suffering. ' "

However, his laments did not mend matters. There was no help for it ; he had to rouse himself from his despair, but instead of going to Kasi he went home.

" You see, " said Karataka, " that both the ascetic and the jackal were undone by want of reflection ; just so we have worked our own ruin by introducing the bull to King Lion. "

" Now, " returned Damanaka, " we must set to work to repair the mistake, and I see no other way than to lay a trap to destroy Sanjivaka. "

" We are not strong enough for such a plan, " replied the other. " How do you propose to

ruin such a powerful rival ? What is your plan ? ”
“ Wiles and tricks or help from others. That is how one achieves what cannot otherwise be achieved.”

In the forest of Pratama Sachi lived a crow who had built his nest in one of the highest trees. Under the same tree a huge snake had taken up his abode in a white-ants' mound. When the crow found that he had such a dangerous enemy for neighbour, he tried either to get rid of him or to destroy him ; but as he could do neither and could not live at ease beside such a neighbour, he sought out a jackal and told him his troubles, asking his advice how best to bring about the destruction of the snake.

“ In a pool formed by the river Varada,” replied the jackal, “ there used to live a great number of fish of all kinds. A cormorant came one day to drink, and seeing what a number of fish were swimming in the clear water, he wanted to prey upon them, but the water was too deep for him. He therefore resorted to a trick.

“ Going to the side where there were most fish, he assumed the attitude of an ascetic. The fish, as soon as they saw their enemy, took refuge at the bottom of the pool, but when they saw the cormorant's humble and modest air, as he remained in one place without moving, they asked him from a safe distance what he was doing.

“ ‘Alas !’ said he in a contrite voice, ‘I am come to expiate my crimes and to prepare for a happy death. I have committed many murders, especially on those of your species ; but I am now a convert and have become an ascetic for the rest of my life.’

“ The fish, to begin with, did not trust him ; but as his conduct did not belie him, they gradually became accustomed to him and at last were satisfied that the conversion was real and that they had nothing to fear.

“ However, the cormorant waited for some days until he was sure of their confidence, and one day when the fish were all round him he seemed suddenly to be plunged in misery ; he wept, he sighed, and gave other indications of deep grief. The astonished fish asked him what was the matter.

“ ‘Ah ! my friends,’ he answered, ‘I am weeping for the misfortunes that are about to overtake you, for I know you are all fated to die a cruel death. The secret and certain knowledge which I have of times and seasons tells me that there will be a widespread drought and not a drop of water will fall for twelve years ; all the rivers, marshes, and pools will soon dry up, and the whole race of fish will die a horrible death. However, my love and affection for you prompt me to save you, and I can do so if you will accept what I propose. Some distance away I have

found a mountain in which there is a pond fed from a perennial source. If you want to live, you must trust yourselves to me, and I will carry you on my back one by one."

"The fish were alarmed by what they had heard and no longer doubted the cormorant's honesty. Fancying that there was nothing to fear, they entrusted themselves to the treacherous bird, who took one of them each day, beginning with the fattest, to the top of a high rock, where he ate them at leisure.

"He had soon devoured all the fish in the pool. But there was still left a crab who suspected the bird and resolved to punish him. So he asked him to do for him what he had done for the fish. The unsuspecting cormorant took him on his back and carried him to the rock. But the crab, seeing no water but only dry rocks covered with the remains of fish, was now certain of the cormorant's treachery. The punishment was not long delayed: the crab seized him by the neck and strangled him. He then dragged himself painfully back and lived in peace in his old home.

"So," said the jackal at the end of the story, "that is how you destroy by cunning those whom you want to destroy. Now let us think of a plan to destroy your enemy as the cormorant destroyed the fish and was himself killed by the crab." The crow thereupon took him to the place and showed him where his dangerous neighbour lived.

While this was going on, the king of the country happened to be hunting in that jungle and, being tired, lay down under the tree where the crow's nest was. He took off his golden collar and his other ornaments and was soon asleep. The jackal at once made a sign to the crow ; the latter flew down and, taking up the collar, hid it in the snake's hole. Then they quietly withdrew.

But one of the king's men had seen what happened and told his master as soon as he was awake. The king thereupon set his people to dig up the place where the collar was hidden. Out came the snake in a rage, ready to attack those who had disturbed him ; but the people were on their guard, and soon crushed him with big stones ; then they continued their work and recovered the collar. The crow, having thus achieved his end, lived happily in the tree with his family.

" So it is," remarked Damanaka, " that we can defeat by cunning those whom we cannot defeat by force, for as the saying puts it : ' Strength dwells in the brain, not in the body ; he is the strongest who is the cleverest.' If you doubt this, listen and be convinced " :

Once upon a time in the forest of Madunata there lived a lion named Pundarika, the terror

and the scourge of all the animals that lived there. Fearing to be exterminated, they resolved to find a forest beyond the reach of their enemy, and were about to carry out their intention when an old jackal advised them to wait.

"Why," said he, "leave in such haste the place of your birth and the land of your fathers? Let us first see if we cannot come to terms with our enemy and live here in peace."

The animals agreed to take his advice, and at once deputed him to make terms with the lion, or at any rate to reduce the slaughter, and to find out on what conditions he would let them live in peace.

Accordingly the jackal went to the lion. "Why do you try so foolishly to destroy our race?" he said. "At the pace you are going there will soon be nothing left in the forest, and you yourself will die of hunger. If you will have a clear understanding with us, we will undertake to provide for all your needs and to keep you supplied without any effort on your part."

"What is that?" cried the lion fiercely, amazed at such language from a jackal.

"Yes," answered the latter, "if you will let us alone, we promise to bring you one animal a day to satisfy your hunger."

The lion agreed, and the animals faithfully kept their promise and sent him an animal every

day to eat. Each kind sent one in turn, and at last it was the turn of the jackal. On the day when he was to be the victim he assembled the beasts and explained that the remedy was in fact only temporary, since they were all being devoured in turn, and he added that if they were not to be ruined, the only chance was to destroy their enemy by cunning. The animals were astonished at the proposal and asked how he meant to carry out such a desperate enterprise.

"I want nobody's help," said the jackal; "I will do everything myself. Now hear how cunning will achieve what force cannot":

In the forest of Kamaka there lived a little lark; but an elephant used to pass over the place where she had built her nest and crush the eggs. The lark often protested humbly, but the elephant paid not the least attention and continued to destroy the poor little bird's family.

The lark, in despair at the elephant's cruelty, determined to get rid of this powerful enemy. She therefore applied to a jackal who lived hard by and told him with tears all her sad story. The jackal told her to dry her tears and to take courage, and promised to find some way of destroying her enemy.

He then collected a crow, a gadfly, and a frog, and they went to look for the elephant, whom

they found lying in the shade of a tall tree. The jackal made a sign to the crow, who perched on the elephant's forehead and began to peck his eyes, while the gadfly flew into one of his ears and made it itch. The elephant, not being able to get rid of his tormentors, trumpeted loudly and rushing furiously from side to side tried to find relief from his woes.

Meanwhile the frog jumped on to a well and began to croak with all his might. The elephant naturally thought there was water near and rushed towards it. But in his distress he threw himself thoughtlessly into the well and died of the fall.

When the enemy was dead the jackal returned to the lark, who lived thereafter in peace ; he himself took his relations and friends to the elephant on whom they feasted for many days.

“ And am I then,” the jackal wound up, “ less than the little lark ? If she could destroy the elephant, can I not find a way to destroy our common enemy the lion ? ” So saying he dismissed them and went alone to the lion’s den.

On the way he passed a well, and looking into it saw his own reflection. He pondered awhile. “ Here,” he said to himself, “ is a good way of getting rid of the lion.” He thought out his plan, and appearing before the lion with a dejected

air, he said, "I am come to serve as your meal for to-day because it is my turn. But before I die I want to tell you some news so disquieting that I hardly dare."

The lion was troubled no less than astonished at these words and asked him to explain frankly. "Well," replied the jackal, "since it is your command I must warn you of your danger. A little way from here there is another lion who is trying to supplant you and to kill you; the better to keep his plans secret, he is living at the bottom of a well and is only waiting for an opportunity to take you by surprise, to kill you and to be king in your place."

On hearing this unexpected news the lion flew into a great rage. "Now," he cried, "I know the truth of the old saying: 'As insult punishes the wise, as ignorance kings, as infidelity the wife, so does the existence of rivals punish the powerful.' Show me at once the place where my rival is hiding, that I may be revenged upon him."

The jackal led him to the edge of the well, told him to look in and see his enemy. The lion, with bristling mane and lashing tail, went up to the well in a fury and, looking in, saw his own image in the water. He thought it was in truth another lion, and with a terrible roar sprang in to the well to fight his rival. The jackal at once called the other beasts, who rolled great stones into the well and crushed their cruel

enemy. From that time on they lived in peace in their forest.

"I know," ended Damanaka, "that we are a feeble folk; but we have brains and cunning, both admirable for carrying out our plans."

Thus by means of these stories the two jackals had thoroughly discussed their plans for destroying their rival. At last Damanaka said, "However plausible your arguments and your instances, I still think we ought to carry out our plans. When you undertake an enterprise, it is not the dangers and difficulties of it which ought to deter you. Boldness and cunning, properly used, will overcome obstacles, and that which seemed to lead to ruin may well very end in our advantage."

A certain herd of goats was in the habit of grazing in the forest of Kerala. One evening, when they were going home, an old goat who could not keep up with them was left behind in the jungle and sought refuge in a cave which he chanced to find there. On going in he saw a huge lion who was lying down inside, and at first was terrified at sight of the dreadful beast. But he thought that if he tried to fly, the lion would soon catch him, and that his only hope was to put a bold face upon it. He therefore walked gravely towards the lion without any sign of fear. The lion was astonished that the goat

could approach him so boldly and thought, "What sort of animal is this that dares to come near me with such assurance? All the others avoid me, or if they see me are so frightened that they run away at once, and here is a beast coming towards me as if he were going to attack me!"

He then went towards the goat and asked him in some confusion, "Who are you with your long beard?"

"I am the Chief of the goats," replied the other firmly. "I am a devotee of Siva. I have sworn to Him to devour in His honour a hundred and one tigers, twenty-five elephants, and ten lions. I also vowed to let my beard grow till the tale was complete. So far I have eaten the hundred and one tigers and the twenty-five elephants, and now I am looking for lions. As soon as I have eaten my ten, I shall have discharged my vow and then I can have my long beard cut."

The lion, surprised and terrified at this announcement and fancying that the goat meant to devour him, rushed out of the cave and fled. On his way he met a jackal, who, seeing him out of breath, asked him why he was so terrified and showed his astonishment that the king of beasts, before whom all others were motionless with terror, should thus leave his home in such haste.

The lion explained to the jackal why he was so alarmed, and gave him a long description of the animal who had so frightened him. "I

never saw such a terrible beast : he had two enormous horns on the forehead, a beard of incredible length fell from his chin. I have never seen any beast so calculated to freeze one with terror."

The jackal soon saw that the object of all this fear was only a goat ; he laughed loudly and twitted the lion with having been terrified by a miserable goat. He then tried to reassure him by saying that this terrible object was one of the weakest and most cowardly of beasts, and persuaded him to return on his tracks, to seize the goat and to eat him. Emboldened by these words, the lion agreed to return with the jackal to the cave where he had left the goat.

When the goat saw the lion returning with the jackal, he felt sure that it was the latter who had done him this bad turn. Summoning all his presence of mind in face of this new danger, he went to meet them with much assurance and said angrily to the jackal, " Is this the way you carry out my orders ? I sent you to bring me ten lions to eat at a sitting and you bring me one ! You shall be punished for your negligence."

No sooner had the lion heard this than, fancying that he was betrayed, he was again seized with terror and immediately took to flight, repeating as he went the old verses : " Never fall foul of cooks, doctors, or magicians ; beware of quarrelling with the governor, with the rich, with those

stronger than yourself, and with the obstinate."

And so the goat, having escaped this danger by his ready wit, continued to live in the jungle at his ease.

"Thus you will see that by adding audacity to cunning you can overcome the greatest difficulties and succeed in the most dangerous adventures. I will give you another instance, and you will agree that wit supported by the help of others can rid us of the most powerful rivals."

In the forest of Nemicha dwelt a lion in whose service were a jackal, a wild dog, and a crow. They were living happily together when an old camel, tired out with work and ill-treatment, escaped from his master and took refuge in the jungle. One day when the lion and his companions were out walking, they met the camel. They were surprised at such an extraordinary meeting, and the jackal began to lay plans for killing the stranger and consulted his friends, who entirely approved. But it was impossible for them to destroy so strong an animal by themselves, and they began to cast about for a plot to induce the lion, their master, to kill him. The jackal had a plan ready at once, and suiting the action to the word, he went up to the camel, showed surprise that he should be wandering alone in the jungle, and asked what had brought him there. The unsuspecting camel told him

frankly why he had escaped and complained especially of the ill-treatment he had received from his master for the numberless services he had done him.

The jackal pretended to praise the camel's escape, and with a few words of sympathy he said : " The place you have chosen to come to is the domain of a lion ; so it would be better for you to appear before him to do him homage and to ask for his protection."

" But why," asked the camel, " do you advise this ? What can there be in common between a lion-king and a wretch like myself whom all the world has cast off ? and how can a miserable creature such as I dare to appear before such a mighty monarch ? "

" The weak," answered the jackal, " always need the protection of the great and should try to gain their favour by a humble submission. Follow us. We will take you to the lion's abode and will introduce you to him."

The camel, not suspecting treachery, followed this advice and went with them to the lion. The jackal introduced him and told his master why the stranger had taken refuge in the wilds, where he hoped to end his days in the shadow of his powerful protection.

The lion received the camel kindly, treated him affably, and became familiar with him. So pleased was he with his good qualities that he

trusted him entirely and made him his chief minister. But the three friends who introduced him, seeing the influence that the stranger had acquired, did not know what to do to carry out their plan of inducing the lion to kill him.

Meanwhile the lion fell sick, and as his illness left him very weak, for a long time he could not hunt. One day, being very hungry, he called his three servants, told them his needs and commanded them to bring him some animal to eat in order to appease the cravings of nature.

The three animals made excuse that they could not do the impossible, for he knew quite well that neither of them was strong enough to attack and kill the kind of animal on which the lion used to feed. "However," added the jackal, "if you really are so desperately hungry, you can satisfy your pangs without going far. All you need do is to kill the camel who lives with you. Considering your necessity, you can do this without scruple and he ought to submit cheerfully to his fate, as the saying has it: 'To give one's life for the life of one's master brings for ever the favour of Sri-Narayana.' Or again, if it pains you too much to sacrifice the life of the camel to save your own, kill us three; we shall die happy in the thought that we are laying down our lives for our master." This speech made the desired impression on the lion. He could no longer bear the pangs of hunger, sprang upon the

camel, killed him, and fed full on the flesh. Then the jackal, the wild dog, and the crow lived on the rest for many days.

"It is thus," said Damanaka, "that we must get rid of the bull our rival. We must employ cunning and the help of others. I will now show you how by these means every enterprise can be successfully achieved."

A certain "titiba" ¹ bird had built his nest on the sea-shore and was living there quietly with his mate. For a long time they had no young, but at last the gods granted them what they so ardently desired. As soon as the young birds were hatched, the hen told her husband that she was very much alarmed to be so exposed on the sea-shore and she feared that at full moon, when the stormy sea overstepped the usual limits and swept away everything in its path, her little ones would be carried off by the merciless water. She therefore advised her mate to choose out a more secure place and to carry the family there.

The cock laughed at her fears and made a joke of them. "What is there in common," he said, "between us and the sea? What could induce this powerful sea to carry off such an insignificant thing as our babies? Here is our home and here it is going to stay, in spite of your silly fears.

¹ A kind of sandpiper.

For my part I think we are lucky to have so powerful a neighbour to protect us from danger. I will tell you how the weak gain by living near the strong."

In the wild country called Mala Sarasi a certain tortoise was living by the bank of a river that ran through the place ; and close beside were some tall trees in whose branches dwelt two eagles. These eagles found plenty to eat on a mango tree which produced luscious fruit, and every day the tortoise used to creep under the tree to feast on the fruit which the eagles let fall.

Living thus so close to one another, the eagles and the tortoise struck up a friendship. But after living there a good while the eagles resolved to go away into a far country. When the tortoise heard of it, she was in despair at losing her friends and did all she could to persuade them to stay where they were. But as she could not move them and saw that they were quite determined to go, she begged them not to leave her but to carry her with them.

"How can we do that ?" replied the eagles. "You are an amphibian ; you live in the water or on the earth, while we belong to the air : how then can we travel together ?"

But the tortoise insisted that they should take her with them, saying that if they would not she should die of grief and despair when they had gone.

Seeing their friend's grief, the eagles at last consented to take her with them. They brought a stick for the purpose, and each holding an end in his beak told the tortoise to grasp the middle tight in her teeth and to be very careful when they rose into the air not to utter a single word. The tortoise promised to obey, and took the stick between her teeth ; the eagles rose into the air and flew away.

As they sailed majestically along, a jackal saw them, and catching sight of the tortoise hanging to the stick, he at once devised a plan to make her let go and to seize her. So he shouted to the eagles, " That you, my lords, should travel in the upper air is natural ; but that this fool of a tortoise should thus try to ape you is enough to make the world laugh."

The eagles flew on and answered nothing ; but the tortoise, hurt at being called a fool, wanted to retort. She opened her mouth, let go the stick, and fell to earth. The jackal at once ran up to make a meal of her and tried to kill her in various ways, but the hard shell was too much for his teeth. He was surprised and " What's this ? " he said. " Your skin is damnably hard, Madam Tortoise." " Well, of course," replied the tortoise. " I have been travelling so long through the air, exposed to the heat of the sun, that my skin is quite dried up and hardened. If you like to carry me to a neighbouring pond,

my skin will grow gradually soft and then you will easily be able to eat me."

The jackal, innocently believing her, put her into a pond near by. But he took the precaution of keeping a paw on her back to prevent escape. When she had been some time in the water, "Well, friend tortoise," he cried, "isn't your skin soft yet?" "Yes," answered the tortoise, "everywhere except where your paw is, for the water can't get there. If you will take it away a few minutes, that part too will grow soft and then you can do as you please with me."

The jackal took away his paw; but the tortoise, the moment she felt herself free, dived into the water to a place which the jackal could not reach, and when she felt herself safe, "Well, friend jackal," she cried, "you called me a fool; pray tell me, which is the fool now?"

Ashamed of having been outwitted by a tortoise, the jackal went slowly back to his earth with his tail between his legs.

When the bird had told his story, his mate said, "Nothing you can say will rid me of my fears. Don't you know the proverb, 'Never be familiar with those stronger than you'? I can't live at ease, when I feel that at any moment I may be swallowed up with my children by the tempestuous sea. We really must leave such a dangerous neighbour and find a place of safety."

But she could not persuade her mate ; he paid no attention to her protests, and finally silenced her, saying firmly and angrily, "Here is our home, and here it will remain, in spite of your silly fears."

But what the hen-bird had feared very soon came to pass ; one day there was a high tide, the water reached the nest and carried off the young in the backwash ; the mother flew up and saved herself, but it was a bitter grief to have to look on helpless while her little family was swept away. The cock-bird was away when this calamity happened. When he came back he found his mate in deep grief and asked what was the matter. She told him, and scolded him for not having foreseen the result and for not listening to the advice which she had given times without number.

The cock, crestfallen and ashamed, tried to think how he could repair the damage he had caused ; as a first step he convened all the birds of his kind, and with this multitude went to find Garuda¹ to ask him to intervene on his behalf.

When Garuda saw this army of small birds he wanted to know what was the matter ; whereupon the bereaved parent told him what the cruel sea had done and prayed him to compel the sea to give him back his little ones. Garuda went at once to the sea-shore and commanded the sea to restore the young birds so unjustly carried off,

¹ The bird of Vishnu.

threatening if he refused to make him feel the extent of his power and the weight of his wrath.

But the sea made light of his threats and treated him with contempt. Garuda therefore reported the affair to Vishnu, and the god, who looked upon the insult to his favourite as an insult to himself, endowed him with a portion of his might and gave him the power to raise violent storms and to agitate the sea in various ways until he should have obtained what he wished.

Clothed with this power, Garuda again went to the sea-shore. But the sea, having learned the terrible power which Vishnu had granted, now humbled himself, asked for pardon, and implored him not to use his power. He gave back alive and well the little birds, the cause of all this agitation and alarm. So the cock joyfully received his family, and having taken them with their mother to a place of safety, lived there for ever so long in peace and security.

"That," said Damanaka, "is how we can overcome difficulties by employing our wits and the help of others ; it is thus that we can achieve the most difficult undertakings and turn everything to our advantage."

Karataka was silent for a while. Then he said, "Yes ; what you say is true, and I will now give you another instance of it."

A certain tiger once lived on the mountain

called Mondra with four jackals who were his servants. By his cruelty he had become the terror and the scourge of all the countryside and had killed and eaten an immense number of men and beasts. At the time when his ferocity had spread terror around, a Brahman who lived in Dharmapuri agraaharam in the south, not far from the river Kaveri, determined to leave his native village and to seek in some far country a livelihood less wretched than that in which he had been living for a long time.

Vada Pahlana (for that was his name) wandered aimlessly over the land, not knowing where the way led him or where he should halt. One day Fate took him to the mountain where the tiger lived. Some of the villagers who met him warned him of the danger he ran of being killed if he dared to go any farther, and advised him to go back; but he paid no heed and boldly went on to the mountain. "For," said he, "I am so wretched that I should be lucky if I became the prey of the tiger and so could end all my troubles."

So he went on towards the forest and soon met the terrible tiger. The latter was astonished that a man should meet him without showing the least sign of fear, and asked him how he was so bold as to come before him with such effrontery.

"What have I to fear?" replied the Brahman calmly. "I have been so long in the depths of

misery and life has become such a burden to me, that I have come here with the express purpose of letting you kill me."

The poor Brahman's despair so moved the tiger that he let him live and, giving him a shelter near his own den, he promised to take care of him. Thereafter he used to bring him every day trinkets of gold or precious stones taken from the men and women whom he killed. The Brahman sold all these in the neighbourhood and very soon had amassed considerable wealth. Meanwhile the tiger had made so close a friend of him that they were hardly ever apart and spent all their spare time together, so that the tiger gave up hunting and the four jackals who usually shared the flesh of the daily victims feared that they would die of hunger.

So they set their wits to work to break up the friendship. Accordingly one day they called the tiger aside, as though they had an important secret to tell him, and said mysteriously that they were much concerned to see his unlimited confidence in the Brahman, and that if he did not take care he would soon be the victim of the perfidious man whom he had loaded with benefits. "For," said they, "we know that this execrable monster intends to poison the food which he will give you two days hence. Be on the look-out, and when you discover how wicked he is, be careful in the future of trusting yourself to any human being;

men are the most treacherous of creatures, as this story will show you."

In the city of Yeti-Sitanagarilived King Varava Santa Raya, whose minister was a Brahman called Manohara. They were living together in perfect accord until certain wicked men, who were jealous of the minister, trumped up false accusations against him and denounced him to the king as a dangerous enemy. Thereupon the king, trusting entirely to their lying words, suddenly dismissed the faithful servant without shadow of proof, took from him all he possessed, and drove him ignominiously from the kingdom.

The poor minister, in despair at seeing that the master who owed him so much had allowed himself to be led astray by the intrigues of jealousy and had treated him so unjustly, resolved to renounce the world, and to begin by purging his sins in the sacred waters of the Ganges.

He set out at once. One day, when passing through a wild place, he came upon a well into which a snake, a tiger, an eagle, and a goldsmith had fallen. As soon as they saw him, they begged him to help them, and when they heard that he was bound for Kasi on pilgrimage they urged that a good deed would only add to his merit if he would but rescue them from the well. At first he refused. He told them that there was no merit

to be gained by helping such as they, since they were one and all bad characters.

But the prisoners redoubled their entreaties, and at last the Brahman, moved by their prayers and by their unhappy lot, went down into the well and rescued them one after the other, beginning with the beasts. As soon as they were free, they fell at his feet with gratitude, promising not to forget this service all their lives and begging him to remember them and to call them if ever he were in trouble ; but before leaving him they warned him that the goldsmith who was still in the well was so treacherous and so incorrigible that he had better let him die there. Then they left him.

The pilgrim was in doubt whether he should rescue the goldsmith or not, but the latter prayed him not to leave him there to die ; what the other animals told him, he said, was pure calumny and was simply the result of the natural hatred of their kind against human beings. "After all," he added, "am I any worse than the others, and how can you refuse to do me the same service ? Besides, do you forget the old saying ?—'Great rivers, tall trees, medicinal plants, and good men are born to do service to others.' Can you have forgotten that the mighty Vishnu himself has only passed through his painful avatars to save others ? "

The Brahman could no longer resist. He set

him at liberty and went on his way, arriving without misadventure at Kasi, where he made his ablutions in the Ganges. He then returned home.

One day on the way back he found himself in a savage spot and was overcome by hunger and thirst. He could not find anything whereabouts to appease the cravings of nature, and was like to die when he bethought him of the animals he had helped out of the well and called upon them. The eagle came first, and seeing his necessity took him to a pool a short distance away, and while the Brahman quenched his thirst he gathered some fine fruit and brought it to him. So the Brahman was relieved ; the eagle put him on the right road and left him.

Later on the Brahman passed by the den of the tiger whom he had also rescued. He recognised his benefactor, kept him with him for some time, and brought him a large stock of gold and jewels, the spoils of his victims. Taking these presents with him, the pilgrim at last arrived at the town where the goldsmith lived. He, as soon as he heard of his arrival, went to meet him, took him home, and showed him many outward signs of friendship. The Brahman thought he was sincere, put himself unreservedly into the other's hands, told him his adventures, and entrusted to him the treasure which the tiger had given him. To see these riches was for the goldsmith to covet them, to covet them to secure them.

He seized the Brahman and, having taken from him all that he owned, dragged him before the prince and accused him of being the head of a gang of thieves whom he had just captured. To add weight to the charge he produced some of the jewellery and gave them up to the prince, but not without taking the precaution to keep for himself and to hide the most valuable. The prince without further proof ordered the so-called thief to be whipped and placed in irons.

Here then was the poor Brahman, unjustly betrayed by the goldsmith, groaning in fetters in a dark dungeon. He remembered what the animals had said before about this wicked man, and you may imagine how he now regretted that he had not taken their advice and let this ungrateful monster die. However, he resigned himself to his unhappy fate, convinced that such was the decree of the god Brahma, and repeating this old saying for consolation : " Wild elephants and the birds of the air often become slaves ; sun and moon are sometimes conquered by thick clouds ; good men are often despised and insulted : thus can no one escape his destiny."

But his woes increased from day to day and there was no remedy. He thought of the snake whom he had rescued from the well and called to him. At once the reptile appeared, and his benefactor, telling him the story of his misery and of the treachery of the goldsmith, begged him

earnestly to help him and to suggest how he could recover the liberty which he had so unjustly lost.

The snake answered that it was not a difficult matter for him to do the favour asked and that he was confident of obtaining the Brahman's liberty very soon. He then told him his plan and went at once to the royal stables. There he found the ceremonial elephant, on which the prince rode on great occasions, and without being detected crept into his trunk. The elephant, feeling a snake in his trunk, became furious and unmanageable, so that no one dared go near him. But he could neither eat nor drink nor could he get a moment's rest.

When the prince heard of the cruel disease of his favourite elephant, he was in despair, because he could not discover the reason for this sudden and alarming change in the valuable beast nor any remedy to relieve him. He therefore summoned the public criers and, giving them a purse of two thousand pagodas, told them to hang it on a long stick and to publish in all the streets of the town that this money and other presents of value would be given to anyone who could cure the royal elephant. But as nobody knew the cause, no one dared promise a remedy.

Meanwhile the Brahman heard of it all in his prison. He told his gaolers that if he were set free he would undertake to cure the royal elephant.

His suggestion was at once carried to the prince, who commanded not only that he be set at liberty, but also that he be paid the two thousand pagodas. The Brahman accordingly went to the elephant, and, making pretence to repeat certain mantrams and to perform some magic rites, he drew forth the snake from his hiding-place. The elephant was no sooner free of the reptile than he felt relief ; he began to eat the grass and drink the water brought to him, and very soon showed no sign whatever of illness or of discomfort.

When the king was told that the Brahman whom but lately he had loaded with chains had suddenly relieved the elephant of his sickness, he had him conducted to him and asked his story. The Brahman told him of his adventures with the animals and the goldsmith whom he had rescued from the well ; he did not forget to mention the gratitude which each of the animals had shown him or that the goldsmith had been guilty of the grossest ingratitude by robbing him of his wealth, by inventing lying tales about him, and by denouncing him as chief of the thieves.

The prince was filled with surprise and admiration at the Brahman's story. As soon as the latter had finished, the prince ordered that the goldsmith be seized and condemned to death for his ingratitude and his slander ; he showed the Brahman great sympathy and, to make up for the injustice which he had unwittingly done him, he

gave him valuable presents as well as the revenue of lands sufficient to give him an honest livelihood for the rest of his days.

The jackals noticed with pleasure that their story had fixed the tiger's attention. "So, you see," they added, "of what men are capable and that there is no kind of treachery which they will not show even to those to whom they are most indebted. Be careful, we cannot repeat it too often, and forestall while there is yet time the wicked plans which the Brahman now living with you has laid to poison you. You will see that neither your unbounded confidence nor the benefits you have done him will restrain him."

On hearing this the tiger was extremely astonished; he could not believe them, and before yielding to his anger he determined to hide it and to wait for two days to see if events justified the charge. But the jackals went to the Brahman and told him that their master was most anxious to share his meal for once and to taste the food he ate. They said they had come to persuade him to prepare a meal in his own way for the following day.

Nothing doubting, the Brahman willingly consented to satisfy the tiger's supposed wishes, and immediately collected roots and vegetables, of which he made several dishes seasoned according to his taste with pepper, mustard, asafoetida,

and spices. When all was ready, he tasted the different dishes, which seemed excellent. Proud of his cookery, he went to find the tiger and delightedly offered the meal prepared with so much care. But as soon as the tiger smelt the strong pepper and the other condiments he was forced to sneeze ; the smell, so different from the dead bodies on which he used to feed, seemed insupportable, and from that time he began to believe that the Brahman really meant to poison him as the jackal had warned him.

But before going to extremes the tiger told the Brahman to put the dishes on the ground and made the jackals taste them. They merely touched them with their tongues and, turning their heads aside, signified their disgust by the most horrible grimaces. The better to assure himself, the tiger wished to taste the food himself, and the taste seemed to him so nasty that, no longer doubting that it was really poison, he fell into a violent rage, sprang upon the Brahman, and devoured him.

“ That,” said Karataka, “ is the kind of trick we must play in order to ruin Sanjivaka, and we must carry out our purpose, no matter by what sort of plot.”

Having now resolved to make an end of the bull, the jackals hastened to put their plan into execution. They took advantage of a time when

their rival was away to appear before the king. He seemed charmed to see them again, and, reproaching them for being so long away without visiting him, asked them why they had thus neglected their duty.

The jackals, bowing three times to the ground before the lion, replied, "Great king, though separated from you, your memory has ever been present with us ; never have we ceased to consider you our sovereign and our master, and your interest has ever been our first care. But we saw that ever since Sanjivaka arrived, your love for us had changed, and that the new-comer enjoyed your complete confidence. We therefore held it prudent to withdraw, since our rival is such a powerful foe. To-day the sincere affection which we have for you has brought us here once more to warn you that Sanjivaka, unmindful of the favours with which you have loaded him, is plotting to take away your life and is only waiting for a chance to carry out his wicked purpose and to become the sole ruler of this forest. Now, we desire to inform you of this secret conspiracy against your life that you may be on your guard and may take steps to defeat it."

When the lion heard what the jackals had told him he was both amazed and terrified. From that time he watched every movement of the bull and resolved to kill him on the least sign of revolt.

Sanjivaka, not knowing that from jealousy they had carried false tales against him, and having no ground to suspect anything, continued to live in the most perfect security.

One day when he was quietly grazing at some distance from the lion's den he was overtaken by a violent storm accompanied by torrents of rain. He at once ran for shelter to the lion's cave with his tail in the air, shaking his head and striving in various ways to get rid of the rain which was falling upon him.

The jackals, seeing him in this state of agitation, ran quickly to the lion, shouting in terrified accents, "King Lion, be on your guard. Here is Sanjivaka coming to kill you. He has chosen this storm, when all nature is thrown into confusion, to fall upon you unawares and to carry out his treacherous design. Look how furious he is ! Look at the awful contortions of his passion ! Be swift to prevent him and rid yourself at once of this monster of iniquity ! "

The lion, seeing Sanjivaka galloping towards him as fast as he could with all the signs of apparent rage, never doubted that he was really come to attack him. With bristling mane and lashing tail he rushed out to meet his supposed enemy and gave him battle. Thus attacked without rhyme or reason, poor Sanjivaka for some time kept up the unequal fight. But his strength was soon exhausted ; he fell a victim to the lion,

who killed him, ate his fill of the flesh, and gave the rest to the jackals.

Having thus rid themselves of Sanjivaka, the two jackals recovered all their old ascendancy with the king and lived quietly in his service for a long time.

SECOND TANTRA

WHEN Vishnu Sarma had finished telling and expounding these fables, his pupils were lost in admiration of their teacher, whose wisdom had been so clearly marked by his dexterous mingling of amusement with instruction. They rose and all three fell at his feet, thanking him for the wise lessons he had given them ; they assured him that henceforth they would regard him as their guru and that they hoped with his help and advice to rise from the state of ignorance in which they had hitherto been. They prayed him to continue the work so happily begun and to give them more of his interesting lessons.

Vishnu Sarma was charmed to see that his pupils were well disposed and noticed with satisfaction that his plan had so far succeeded. He continued his task with enthusiasm and proceeded to tell them fresh fables.

“ Now,” said Vishnu Sarma, “ listen, my young princes, to the fable I am going to tell you. In the complex nature of this life we must all help one another. It is by this mutual help that the

weak escape the dangers to which they are exposed from the strong, as you shall now hear."

A certain dove, by name Chitrani, had built her nest on the top of the mountain Kanakachala and was living there comfortably with her family. At the foot of the mountain dwelt a crow. One day Vega-Varma (such was the crow's name) was flying round in search of food when he noticed a fowler spreading his nets in the way. He was frightened at sight of the danger and at once returned home.

The dove Chitrani passed by the same place with her family, but being off their guard, they all flew into the net and were captured. What was to be done? How could they escape from certain death? There was in fact no escape, no hope of obtaining their liberty. Already the fowler was running up to seize his prey, when all at once under the impulse of danger they took to flight together, carrying with them the net that enclosed them. So they succeeded in escaping, and the fowler, who had reckoned upon his capture, was not a little surprised when he saw them fly away with his nets. But they reached their home in safety still entangled in the nets into which they had flown.

When the crow saw them coming in this strange chariot, he hastened to meet them; and as soon as Chitrani saw him, she told him of their adven-

tures and asked him to help them by disentangling the nets. The crow replied that he could not free them, but suggested a rat of the name of Hiranya Varma who lived close by and who could help them. Accordingly Chitrani called the rat, who came up at once, and when he saw the captives he began to scold Chitrani for her imprudence and folly which had brought them to this pass. Chitrani defended herself and quoted the maxim : "No one, be he never so wise or prudent, can escape his destiny." Then the rat, pitying the poor doves, called his fellows, and they all set to work to gnaw the knots of the nets, so that very soon they had freed Chitrani and her family.

The crow, who had seen the signal service performed by the rat for the doves, was anxious to make friends with him ; he hoped also to obtain a useful ally should occasion arise. He accordingly made overtures to him ; but the rat replied that they were of totally different species, the one living in the air and the other in the earth ; he did not see the use of the close friendship of two creatures between whom Nature had fixed such a wide gulf.

But the crow insisted. Matters of personal interest and friendship, he said, are decided by our inclination. We do not consider distance or the difference of condition. So the rat yielded and they swore a close friendship. One day

when they were out together they happened to meet a deer ; they stopped him and asked his name and where he was going. The deer said he was called Chitranga, told them his story, and asked if he might join them. They readily consented, and so the three struck up a lasting friendship.

One day while they were out together and were very thirsty, in their search for water they found a well into which a tortoise had fallen. As soon as she saw the three friends she begged them to take her out of her prison and to put her somewhere where she could live in comfort. Pitying her plight, they rescued her and took her to a spring of clear water ; and she, mindful of this service, also became their friend.

For a long time the four lived happily together, but one day when the deer had gone away to graze he fell into the snare of a hunter. But when the rat saw that his friend the deer was so long in returning, he guessed that he had met with an accident. So he called the crow and told him what he feared and advised him to fly up and try to discover their friend. This the crow did, and after looking about for some time, at last saw poor Chitranga in the snare struggling hard to get out, but in vain.

The crow at once told Hiranya Varma what had happened to their friend, and he, calling his fellow-rats, sallied out to help him. They soon

set him free. Chitranga went home with his friends and the accident was soon forgotten. But later on, when the four friends were resting quietly in the shade of a tree, they were suddenly disturbed by the unexpected sight of a crowd of hunters. This alarmed them. The crow and the deer could easily avoid pursuit, but not so the rat, and least of all the tortoise. The other two would not leave them to the mercy of the hunters, who were coming on quickly, and so the deer undertook to attract attention to himself in order to save the life of his friends. He pretended to be lame. The hunters, seeing him limp and apparently hardly able to hold himself up, all ran to capture the easy prey. But the deer led them a long dance, sometimes quickening his pace, sometimes slowing down, until at last, having made them follow for a long time, he fairly used his four legs and was soon out of sight. Meanwhile the tortoise and the rat had found a place of safety out of reach of the hunters.

Once more the four friends were united and lived quietly together; these dangers had taught them the value of true unity and of sincere friendship, and by experience they learnt how the weak need to support one another.

THIRD TANTRA

AN owl, by name Vimarda, had built his nest among the rocks of the mountain Pariatra. He was the chief of his clan and had chosen for his ministers three other owls called Dakshaksha, Drudraksha, and Kridaksha. The chief of the crows, whose name was Vyasa Varma, had also built a nest in the boughs of a leafy tree which grew at the foot of another hill at some distance from the owls. His ministers were three crows, Pratipti, Santipti, and Stiranjivi.

But the owl-chief was filled with pride and thoughts of empire. He thought there was no one equal to him in power. He therefore called his ministers and told them that he intended to be crowned king and that they were to make ready for the ceremony. The ministers, far from dissuading him, showed every sign of approval.

The crow-chief soon heard of this project and quickly grasped the danger. In his fear and anxiety he summoned his ministers, told them the plans of their inveterate enemy the owl and all his fear of the consequences. "For," said he,

"if the owl becomes king, we crows are doomed ; he will soon make an end of us. So I have called you in order to devise some means of meeting the danger that threatens us."

When he had ended, they all appeared to share their chief's alarms. Pratipti spoke first, taking as his text the following saying : " Let the weak avoid quarrels with the strong ; let them submit to them or yield their place." " How can we, weak as we are, think of opposing the owl who is so much stronger ? "

Santipti agreed with his colleague, adding the saw : " Never undertake what you cannot accomplish." " The powerful," he went on, " and the exalted in rank should not trust themselves blindly to those stronger than they. They should seek the alliance of others still stronger. And so the weak, when opposed to the strong, should try to ally themselves with others that with their help they may overcome their enemies. But we who are clearly the weaker party in this dispute have no one to whom we can apply ; our best course is to withdraw altogether."

Then Stiranjivi spoke. " This feud," he said, " between the owls and the crows is not a thing of yesterday ; it has always existed, and we may expect that the stronger the owls become, the greater will be their hatred. The only way to put an end to this constant danger is to devise a plan to destroy this owl-king and all his race.

We shall never live in peace till we are rid of these implacable enemies. I will myself undertake the task, and I hope to accomplish it."

The crow-chief was much pleased with Stiranjivi's advice and praised the courage and devotion of his minister. He loaded him with presents and promised other favours when his task was fulfilled. Thereupon Stiranjivi set to work upon his plan before the owls had had time to elect their king. He went to their abode and humbly asked to see the chief minister. He was asked what brought him there, and replied that he was a minister of the crow-community and had long been so, but that he was tired of serving so contemptible a master. He had therefore resigned and had come to ask the owl-minister to use his influence with the owl-chief and to obtain for him some responsible post at court, promising that he would never abuse their confidence.

Surprised at such language from an inveterate enemy, the owl wished to make further inquiry and began by refusing his request, saying that the owl-chief was a vile person whom he would never advise anyone to serve. He reminded him of the old saying : " As a good man shuns the wife of another, as parrots shun the barren trees, so should the wise shun the service of wicked kings." " This service," he added, " which you want to enter is in no way suited to you. I

advise you to go away. Shall I remind you of another saying ?—‘ Better abide in the jungles with all their perils than serve a king who knows not truth.’ So I repeat, give up your plan. You do not know what misfortune will befall you at the hands of this false chief. I will tell you a story which will convince you more than all my arguments how dangerous it is to trust the false and the hypocrites.”

Under a tall tree on the hill called Sanumanu lived two rabbits who were great friends, but one day they fell out, and this was the cause. For a long time past they had decided to go on pilgrimage together, and one of them proposed to his friend that they should take advantage of the fine weather to make the journey. The other demurred. He said it was spring, a time for love-making and not for travelling, and they ought to spend it with their mates ; they had better wait for the hot weather, and he was ready to go then, but he was resolved to stay at home for the present.

The first rabbit insisted that that was the only time of the year fit for travelling, and reminded his friend that they had agreed to go together. But he did not like to leave his mate alone, fearing that his friend would meddle with her, as the saying has it : “ Three things destroy the closest friendship : to be always asking a friend

for favours, to lend him money, and to visit his wife in his absence."

The quarrel grew serious. At last they decided to ask a third person which was the best season to travel in. Accordingly in their search they came to the town of Kantavati, near which lived a cat famous for his wiles and his thefts. One day he had crept into the house of a shepherd and had found a pot full of curdled milk. He put his head in and ate it all up, but as the neck of the pot was small he could not get it out again. The master of the house returned, and the cat, alarmed at the sound, fled to a neighbouring temple with his head still in the pot. He shrank into a corner and there remained in the greatest fear, not daring even to move.

The two rabbits came to this temple and were much surprised to find the cat with his head in the pot. They were suspicious and dared not approach, but as the cat remained motionless they thought he had turned sanyasi and had put his head into the pot as an extra penance. They therefore went up to him and asked him to judge their dispute, since they could find no one better than such a holy person. The so-called sanyasi listened to their story and pretended that he could not let them finish it, since such scandals overwhelmed him with grief and that holy men could not be disturbed from penance by such scandalous tales, which belonged only to the

worldly. Of course these objections only whetted the rabbits' desire that he should be their judge, for they felt that anyone so scrupulous as the cat must be impartial, and they insisted that they would not leave him till he had decided their dispute. The cat still pretended that he was very reluctant to do so, but at last told them that the first thing to do was to take off the pot, so that he could hear them better. As soon as this had been done, the cat's only thought was how to make them his prey, and he said humbly, "I am getting on in years and cannot hear well. You must come closer and sit one on each side and speak into my ear." But no sooner had the rabbits placed themselves within his reach than he seized them both and ate them up.

"So," said the owl, "you see how dangerous it is to trust the wicked and the hypocrite. What does the old proverb say?—'Never attach yourself to a wicked man nor to a guru who depends upon the doctrines of another.'"

When the tale was ended, Stiranjivi said he was quite convinced and had given up his project to take service under the owl-chief; but he thought that the owl, from what he had said, disapproved of making such a wicked person king and tried to persuade him to do his best to prevent it, for besides other defects he could not see at all in the light, and since he could not tell

what was going on round him how could he be entrusted with the royal rank ?

Then he took his leave and reported everything to his own master. Meanwhile the owl-minister pondered over what he had said. He saw the danger of making his master a king, and was convinced that he would at once become arrogant and would respect no one. He therefore went to him and told him that the omens were inauspicious ; they must wait for four or five months for favourable ones. The would-be king made no difficulty. But another minister came up with the news that the first was a traitor, was in close correspondence with Stiranjivi and was plotting to make himself king. The owl-chief at once flew into a rage. He wanted to execute the traitor on the spot ; but the informer, unwilling to let matters go so far, argued strenuously for delay, saying that the moment of his election was not the time to increase his enemies by executing one of his chief ministers. He had much better begin by ridding himself of the crows.

“ Very well,” said the owl-chief, and wanted to set to work at once to destroy the crows at a blow. So he collected all that was needed, and when all was ready he went one night to besiege the tree where the crows lived. The latter were taken by surprise and great numbers perished ; but many escaped, and amongst them the crow-

chief and his three ministers. When they were out of danger, the chief called his advisers and asked them what they proposed in order to meet these fatal attacks. One of them answered that rather than run the risk of such dangers and even worse, they had much better remove the tribe to some quiet spot where they could live in peace. The second opposed this advice. He thought they should hold their ground, however powerful the enemy might be, and should try to be revenged for these calamities, and he illustrated this advice as follows :

We are told that when the gods and the demons met together to churn the sea of milk and to draw the nectar which was the elixir of immortality, two demons, enemies of the gods, joined the assemblage without being recognised and drank the nectar. The Sun and Moon saw them and betrayed them to Vishnu. He, being angered by the impious fraud, sought to destroy them with his terrible Chakra¹; but as they were immortal, it was all in vain. Thereupon, resolved to punish them somehow, Vishnu turned them into two planets, Rahu and Ketu, and ever since these two have hated the Sun and Moon, so that, though they were much weaker, they never cease to torment them and now and again are able to put out their light.

¹ The wheel or disc of Vishnu.

"This shows you the advantage of holding your ground and of trying to be revenged on your enemy."

Then Stiranjivi spoke. "It seems to me," he said, "that the advice of the first minister is the worst possible. Before we come to that, let us try if we cannot destroy the whole tribe of owls; if this cannot be done by force, perhaps it can be managed by guile. This is what I propose. You must all go away and leave me alone here. Then when the owls come to attack us again, I shall pretend that I have been badly treated and driven out, because I wanted you to submit to them in order to gain peace and quiet. Then the chief will pity me, because I have suffered on his behalf, and I will ask him to take me into his service; I shall then be able to watch him, I shall discover the favourable time to destroy him and his tribe, and shall warn you accordingly."

This idea was approved, and Stiranjivi was left alone. That very night the owls came again, but were surprised to find no one but Stiranjivi, who was sighing deeply and seemed overcome by grief. The owl-chief asked him what was the matter.

"Alas!" replied the crow, shedding tears, "the cruelty of my companions has nearly cost me my life. I will tell you frankly what has happened. As I saw the enmity between your

race and ours and the dangers we were always running, I dared to advise our chief to make peace and to accept any conditions which you offered. He flew into a rage, attacked me with his servants and pecked me till I am more dead than alive. Then they drove me away and themselves flew off, leaving me in this sad state. Now that I am helpless I am determined never again to go near so cruel a master, and I beseech your pity ; condescend, my lord, to protect me, if you will not accept me as one of your humblest servants. I swear to do my best to give you no cause to repent of your goodness."

The owl-chief suspected nothing. He pitied Stiranjivi and was at first inclined to show him the favour he asked. He hoped further that he might be useful in future encounters with the crows. But on second thoughts he preferred to consult his ministers.

Dakshaksha agreed with the chief, but Drudraksha thought they should be cautious. The crow was a stranger, and up till now one of their avowed enemies. They ought to have better proof of his feelings towards them, for who could swear that he was sincere ? How many instances there were of traitors who under the guise of friendship and service had betrayed those who had trusted them. He gave them this example.

In the town of Brahmapuri there was a

Brahman by name Punyasila, a man of importance, feared and respected by everyone. He had a cow which had grown fat by grazing on the neighbours' crops, where she did much damage. But as everyone knew to whom she belonged, no one dared complain.

One day when returning home she met an emaciated cow, which grew envious at sight of the other's fine condition, and asked her how she managed to live so well when she herself was dragging out a miserable existence. The fat cow told her that she was able to keep well and strong by grazing on unguarded fields and eating her fill of the most succulent plants. "Come with me," she said; "I will show you the best pasture round, and very soon you will be as fat as I am."

The lean cow joyfully accepted this invitation. One day while they were grazing together, the owner of the field saw them and ran up to drive them off. They ran away, and the fat cow, being strong and well-loving, was soon out of sight, but the lean one, who could hardly stand up, quickly fell into the hands of the enemy, who beat her almost to death and took her to her master, recommending him to take steps to prevent his beast from damaging the neighbours' fields. Whereupon the owner, stung by these reproaches, tied a great block of wood¹ to the cow's neck

¹ A common practice in India to-day.

which fell between her legs and hindered all her movements.

"This," said Drudraksha, "will show you how careful you ought to be before consorting with wicked men or with men about whom you know little or nothing."

Krudraksha then spoke. "An old proverb," said he, "says that the friendship of the wicked and the hatred of the good are equally dangerous. Let us not forget this, and before we accept Stiranjivi let us first find out what sort of person he is, that we may not rashly trust an unknown who might betray us. Besides, Stiranjivi belongs to a tribe mean, cowardly, and ignorant by nature, and this fable will show you the danger of trusting such."

In Kaminipuram lived King Aviveka Raya. Fearing to trust anyone about his person, he had taught a monkey to keep watch over him day and night and thought himself secure with this guardian. Now, in the same town there was a Brahman who held a high post at court. He had fallen violently in love with a prostitute, and one day when they were together she prayed him to bring her the king's gold necklace, telling him at the same time that if he did not satisfy her he should never again set foot in the house.

The Brahman, anxious to please his mistress, sought for a favourable opportunity to steal the necklace, and knowing that the king was guarded by a monkey, which animal is terrified of snakes, he obtained one, and putting it into a pot, managed to creep into the royal bedroom while the king slept. The king was lying on his couch in deep sleep and the monkey was keeping guard with a long sword. The thief let loose the snake, and the monkey no sooner saw it crawling over the floor than he let fall his weapon in terror, and forgetting his master, thought of nothing but the snake. Meanwhile, the Brahman, taking advantage of his fright, went up to the king's bed, stole the necklace, and took it to his mistress.

"This story of the monkey tells us how dangerous it is to trust injudiciously. Here is another to prove how our enemies lay traps for us under the pretence of benevolence."

There was once a Brahman called Himadata, who eked out a subsistence by cultivating a garden in the village of Sumatipattanam, on the banks of the Narbada. He sowed a large number of water-melons and cucumbers which produced an excellent crop. But while he was waiting to gather it, a troop of monkeys invaded the garden and ravaged it.

The poor Brahman was much distressed to see

all his labour destroyed. He tried to drive the monkeys out, but he could not get rid of them ; they were clever enough to avoid all the snares he set. At last he hit upon this plan. He took a handful of rice in one hand and a stick in the other, went to the garden, and lay down among the plants, pretending to be dead. When the monkeys came to create the usual havoc, they saw a motionless man, apparently dead, and went up to him ; but when they saw the rice and the stick they said, "What's this ? a dead man armed like this ? This is a trick to entrap us." And from that day they became more wary than ever.

"These monkeys managed by their sagacity to escape the danger. Let us imitate them. Let us too act with prudence, and try to find out Stiranjivi's intentions before taking him into our community."

Krudaksha sat down. Dakshaksha replied : "The first of virtues is to help others. History tells us how Vishnu, convinced that this virtue surpassed all others, practised it in ten avatars to save the souls of the just upon the earth. Now, to show you that we ought not to abandon those who have trusted us and have sought our protection, listen to this story."

There was a certain king, Sibi Chakravarti,

who lived in the town of Dharmavarti with his minister Dharma Pala. He was greatly beloved for his virtues, and his fame had spread abroad. One day the god Devendra wished to visit the town of Amaravati, and Naramuniswara, who lived there, made ready a fitting throne and went to receive him with due respect. This done, he asked the god why he had come so unexpectedly. The god answered that he had come to hear what was going on on the earth and asked him which was the most celebrated king then reigning. Naramuni said that the most renowned was Sibi Chakravarti. "Ah!" said Devendra with an incredulous smile, "I suppose he is one of those mortals who make a show of virtue, but in their hearts are wicked. However, since he is so famous, I will see him and judge for myself."

So saying, he mounted a dove in order to travel to the king as quickly as possible and proceeded to the palace. But as he travelled through the air he changed himself into a hawk. The dove was terrified and fled for refuge to the palace of Sibi Chakravarti, having rid herself of the hawk. But the god pursued her in this shape, arrived almost at the same time, and claimed his prey as the right of the pursuer.

The king refused, for the demand seemed to him unjust; he explained that it would be dishonourable to deliver up the bird that had taken refuge with him. The hawk insisted, but the

king was firm, maintaining that such was not the act of virtuous men.

Then the hawk changed his tone, and told the prince that if he would not deliver up the bird, he would be satisfied with a piece of meat equal in weight to the dove. The king agreed to this rather than be false to hospitality, and placing the dove in one scale, he cut off a piece of meat which he put into the other. He added a second, a third, and a fourth, but still the dove weighed down the balance, until the king himself got into the scale and told the hawk that he must devour him and let the dove go free.

But Devendra, admiring his heroic devotion and resuming his proper shape, revealed himself as the god, heaped praises upon the king and showered favours upon him. Then he ascended into heaven.

“The moral is,” said Dakshaksha, “that we must never abuse the sacred rite of hospitality and must grant an asylum to those who fly to us for refuge. I advise, therefore, that we receive Stiranjivi without more ado.”

So the matter was argued out for and against. At length the chief decided to take in Stiranjivi, since he was convinced that there was nothing to fear.

As soon as the crow was thus admitted, he began to cast about to gain the confidence of

the chief and his ministers by his docile behaviour and by complying with all that was asked of him. This he did so adroitly that very soon the owls came to look upon him as a brother rather than as a stranger ; he was admitted everywhere ; he came and went as he liked, and no one suspected him.

Meanwhile he was diligently learning the life, the customs, and the strength of the owls. He carefully explored their habitation in the fissures of a cave, with a view to a successful attack upon them, and found that there was only a single entrance and exit. He soon discovered that the owls could only see by night. When he had finished his examination in every detail and had made his plans, he went to the crow-chief, told him all that he had found out, and explained his plan for exterminating the whole tribe without allowing one to escape ; how this could easily be done by blocking up the entrance with inflammable material, setting fire to it and so suffocating them all. But the chief could not bring himself to undertake so hazardous an enterprise. He dared not strike the first blow against such a powerful enemy or attack him in his own abode. They were much weaker and had always been defeated in previous encounters, being put to flight on each occasion. If they did not succeed, there was an end of the tribe. The offence would never be forgotten and the existing hatred would only be

intensified. They would be attacked, persecuted implacably, and would end by perishing miserably.

"Do not be afraid," said Stiranjivi; "I know what I am talking about. I have seen everything, heard everything, prepared everything. I should not be so foolish as to propose such a difficult task if I were not sure of success. Remember what it cost me to obtain admittance. My plan is the result of mature reflection; I have weighed the chances and have only decided after being convinced of success. Hesitate no longer, delay no more, but lead your crows to the cave where our enemies live."

The courage of the crow-chief was restored by these words. He assembled his forces and told them the plan by which they hoped to exterminate their enemies at a blow. He then ordered them to take each a piece of straw or dry wood in his beak and to follow him to the place where Stiranjivi would lead them. Thousands of crows obeyed and arrived noiselessly at the cave. They had timed the enterprise for midday when the sun is hottest, and they closed the entrance with the straw, the thorns, and the dry wood which they had brought. Then they got a burning brand from somewhere close by and set a light to this heap.

It was on fire instantly. The owls who were in the cave tried to escape, but they were caught by the flames, and those who remained in the

cave were suffocated by the smoke, so that not one got out alive. Then the crows who had thus rid themselves of their troublesome enemies lived in that forest happily ever afterwards.

Vishnu Sarma ended. The princes had listened attentively. Then he said, " You see, my boys, how careful we ought to be in choosing our friends, and in trusting those of whom we know little. The stories I have told you have served to illustrate the old saying : ' To reveal the mind to another without knowing his spells ruin. Prudence will deliver from all dangers.' "

FOURTH TANTRA

WHEN Vishnu Sarma had finished these stories, his pupils, who admired more and more the wisdom of their teacher both in what he told them and in his way of telling it, assured him that they would never forget the trouble he had taken to educate them into a better way of life. "We were plunged in thick darkness," they said, "and you alone have been able to bring us light. We shall ever look upon you as our master, our dear guru, and will always honour you as such. Now go on with the work you have begun and tell us more of your stories."

Vishnu Sarma was delighted at his success and at once began a new fable.

Listen then (said he) to a story which will teach you not to consort with the wicked. Near the western sea there is a forest called Vipinantsara, where a monkey called Sanjivaka was king of his tribe. Time went on tranquilly until an epidemic broke out and swept away large numbers, so that Sanjivaka's power was much reduced. One of his enemies who ruled over another part

of the vast forest heard of his misfortune, and resolved to take advantage of his weakness to drive him away altogether.

Hearing of this, Sanjivaka, who felt that he was in no condition to resist, sought safety in flight, as the saying has it: "Better to live a wandering life than a life of misery in one's native land where one was wont to live in luxury." He wandered about haphazard, not knowing where to go or to stay, and after some time he found himself on the sea-shore. He came upon a fig tree laden with fruit and decided to take up his abode there, where he could at least live in peace and plenty.

One day when seated in the tree he let fall some of the fruit he was eating. A crocodile heard the fruit fall and went to taste it, and finding it to his liking, then noticed that fruit was lying all about. He went to the bank to feed upon it.

Tantrachaka (that was his name), seeing that he could get plenty to eat without any trouble, took up his abode there and forgot all about his family and everything else. He soon struck up a friendship with his neighbour the monkey, and the latter used to choose the best of the fruit and throw it down to his friend. Thus they were living in harmony together. The monkey found consolation for past misfortune in the thought that he had found a faithful companion whose company he could enjoy without fear.

But Kantaka-Prapti, the crocodile's mate, was alarmed at his long absence. She feared that some accident had happened, and this idea made her very anxious. In her perplexity she called in another crocodile called Gupta-Gamani and told him her fears ; she explained that her husband had been long away and that she had had no news. She was afraid that he had fallen into a fisherman's snare and was dead ; would he therefore go himself, find out if he was alive or dead, and come back as quickly as he could to tell her ?

Gupta-Gamani set out at once. While he searched for the missing husband, now in the water and now on the land, asking for news from everyone he met and getting none, Sanjivaka and Tantrachaka were living happily together without care or thought for anyone else. At last he arrived at the tree under which Tantrachaka was living. He accosted the truant and chided him for being so long away. He told him that his wife was pining with anxiety and was afraid he had met with a fatal accident, and as she was now at death's door he must come at once if he wished to see her alive.

Tantrachaka was alarmed. He consulted Sanjivaka, who advised him to go at once, adding that it ought to be one's first care to help one's near relatives. So Tantrachaka left, taking with him the best of the fruit for his sick wife. When he had arrived, she was overjoyed to see him again,

but upbraided him for his long absence and told him she had nearly died of anxiety on his account. Tantrachaka tried to soothe her, telling her that so charming was Sanjivaka that he had not noticed how the time went by ; then he gave her the fruit which he had brought. When Kantaka-Prapti had tasted it, she found it so much better than the food she could get from the sea that she feared her husband would soon tire of the latter and would return to Sanjivaka. As she did not want to lose him again, she set to work to lay plans for the monkey's destruction, and she pretended to be dangerously ill. She told her husband that the only remedy was the liver of a monkey, which was considered to be a specific for her complaint, and begged him to get her one ; if he could get no other, he was to bring Sanjivaka's to her.

This request placed Tantrachaka in a dilemma. He could not bring himself to betray his friend to the point of becoming his murderer, but as he did not suspect his wife's design, he really believed that she was in danger and that a monkey's liver was the only thing to cure her. For a long time he was undecided what to do, but at last he said to himself that "one's first care must be to help one's relatives," and so returned to Sanjivaka, resolved to seize him and to take him to his wife.

The monkey was glad to see him again and asked after his wife. The crocodile said she was very

ill, but that he did not care so much since he had such a good friend. "I have," said he, "never had any rest since I left you, and I longed to be with you again. Such friends as you are drive away all thought of wife and family. That is why I have come back, although my wife was so ill, for it is the greatest pleasure in the world to be with you." The monkey was surprised and pleased to hear all this, but said that it was his duty to look after his sick wife. "If you cannot live without me," he said "I will come with you and advise you as to her cure. Then we can come back and live happily as we used to. But how can we travel together since I belong to the land and you to the water ? "

"As to that," replied the crocodile, overjoyed at his easy success, "I will carry you on my back ; I shall take care to swim on the surface and you will not be so much as wet." Sanjivaka thereupon took his seat and they swam together to the crocodile's home. But on the way Tantrachaka was smitten with remorse at the crime he contemplated ; he felt that he was about to betray his best friend who had trusted him absolutely. He cursed the luck which had brought about this dreadful dilemma, and repeated the old saw : "The touchstone reveals the quality of gold ; speech reveals the nature of a man ; his charge reveals the nature of a bull ; but nothing reveals the nature of a woman."

He kept on repeating these words, sighing the while ; and though he spoke low, the monkey gathered enough to convince him of his danger. But he remembered that it was the moment of danger that demanded presence of mind and began to think how he could escape death. He then asked the crocodile what was the matter, and he answered that he would tell him everything after their return. "I have a presentiment," said the monkey, "that your wife is all right again. It is useless for us both to go to her. Please put me down on the shore and you will then be able to travel more quickly. When you have been home, you can tell me all the news, and if necessary I will gladly come back with all the medicines needed."

The crocodile did not perceive the trick and landed Sanjivaka accordingly. The latter, of course, made the best of his way home and climbed the fig tree. There upon the top of the highest branches he collected himself, and putting his hand to his head, cried out :

"Thank goodness I have escaped so well ! I shall be wiser in future. I thought this lonely place would serve me for a shelter, but I see now the meaning of the proverb : 'Not even an ascetic who has renounced the world, who lives apart in a dense forest and who has conquered his five senses, is free from danger.' "

Very soon the crocodile returned to say that

his wife was much worse. He begged him to go back with him as he had promised, and to help to cure her. But the monkey only laughed. "Silly fool!" he cried, "do you take me for an idiot? Don't you know that monkeys are the cleverest creatures? I was caught once; do you expect to catch me a second time? If you had had any sense, you would not have let me go. Now that I know all about you, I am not going to trust myself to you again, and I don't want to repeat the adventure which the ass had. If you don't know the story, I will tell it. It will amuse you.

A certain lion ruled over the forest of Vigraha, and after a long and happy life he fell ill of a lingering disease which threatened to become fatal. He grew worse, and at last called in his minister and told him that the sovereign remedy was the heart and ears of an ass, and that he must get him these somehow so that he might recover. The minister promised to do so, and went at once to a village hard by, where he very soon found a donkey belonging to a washerman. It was quietly grazing. The minister told him not to fear; he did not mean to hurt him, but, on the contrary, wanted to be friends. But the donkey did not trust him. However, as time went on and the jackal showed no signs of ill-will, he gradually became accustomed to him

and ended by striking up a friendship with him.

Then the jackal thought it was time to play the trick he had meditated. "My dear ass," said he, "why do you live such a miserable life? You are overloaded; your ungrateful master is always ill-treating you; you get no relief and not enough to eat to keep you from starving. I have grown fond of you and am sorry to see how wretched you are; if you like I will introduce you to our king the lion and he will protect you. Then you will be able to lead a happy life and everyone will respect you. Why not, then, leave the piles of linen and dirty rags with which your master loads you and come to the lion's court, where you will live with honour and will want for nothing?"

The unsuspecting donkey consented joyfully. When they reached the lion's den, the jackal told him to wait a minute while he announced him. Soon after the lion came out and was about to spring upon him, but the donkey saw the danger and, being young and agile, promptly fled. The sick lion could not catch him and returned discomfited to his cave.

But another jackal who lived near heard that the lion wanted the heart and ears of a donkey, and learning of the mishap went to the lion and undertook to bring the same donkey and to place him in his clutches to do as he liked with. The

lion accepted this offer ; the jackal then went to the donkey and began to tax him with cowardice. "What are you afraid of that you would not receive the greetings of the king ? Perhaps his rough manner frightened you, but that was only because he was so glad to see you for the first time. It is the lion's way to show his joy somewhat violently. You ought to seize the chance of his protection and to put your trust in him ; you will soon reap the reward. Follow me, and throw yourself fearlessly into the arms of such a powerful friend."

The foolish donkey was deceived once again ; he went back to the lion's den, and as soon as he came near the lion sprang upon him and tore him to pieces.

The monkey ended. "And do you think," he said, "that I should be so foolish as to trust myself to you again when I have once been lucky enough to escape ?" So the crocodile returned crestfallen to his old home and never dared go near the monkey again.

"I have thus shown you," said Vishnu Sárma, "that you should never trust the wicked ; I have also shown you that courage and presence of mind are necessary in the hour of danger, for it is by these that we can hope to escape it."

The princes repeated their admiration and their thanks. "Pray continue," they said, "these fables by which we can profit so much and which pass the time so pleasantly."

FIFTH TANTRA

ENCOURAGED by his success and proud that he had so far been able to fulfil the promise made to the other Brahmins as well as to the king, Vishnu Sarma now began the fifth series of his apologetics.

“ I am now going to show you that you must always reflect before acting and must forecast the consequences before undertaking anything ; if you do not do this, you are inviting disaster, as you shall now hear.”

There was a certain Brahman called Deva Sarma who lived at Chitramitra with his wife Yagnasai. They were very happy, but they had no children. For a long time past they had prayed the gods to grant them a child, but all in vain. At last, however, their prayers were heard and Yagnasai became pregnant. Deva Sarma’s joy knew no bounds ; this was the crown of his happiness. He said to his wife, “ Very soon you will give me a boy, and I shall be a happy father ; we will celebrate the namakarma sumptuously, and I will see that the little fellow

has plenty to eat, so that he may grow quickly. Then we will have the upanayana. He shall have the best of masters for his education ; he will become a learned man, and will be so distinguished that he will get the best posts. Then he will take care of us and will give us all that is necessary to live in comfort."

The Brahman was going on when his wife burst out laughing. Then she became serious. "What is the use of such foolish talk ? Don't you know the proverb ?—'Don't get the cradle till the child is born.'¹ Let me tell you how these childish projects come to nothing when you do not reflect."

A certain Brahman called Soma Sarma lived in an agraharam named Dharmapuri. He had only one son, Yagna Sarma, who was very quick at his books, learnt all there was to learn, and went out into the world to get his living. His learning and his pleasant manners brought him in a good income, which he shared with his family.

One day he heard that a Brahman was giving a feast on the anniversary of his father's death, and he went to it. There was a large crowd, but the feast was on a sumptuous scale and there was plenty for everyone. Yagna Sarma took care to eat his fill, and on the way home he met

¹ Anglicé: "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched."

another Brahman who was giving a similar feast that very day. He hastened to it and found the guests just taking their seats. The master of the house knew that he had been at the other feast, and when he saw him he laughed and said with a sneer, "You have done pretty well already ; have you any room for a second meal ?" But Yagna Sarma was not disturbed, took his seat placidly, and ate as though he had been hungry all day.

After supper, clarified butter and meal were distributed. Yagna Sarma put his share into earthen pots, and on the way home he set them down and began to calculate. "Well, I have had a good meal to-day ; to-morrow I shall not want one, but what am I to do with all this ? I know. I will sell them, and then I can buy a goat. The goat will have kids, and I shall soon have a flock. I will sell the flock and buy a cow. She will have calves, and very soon I shall be quite rich. People will hear of this, and one of my neighbours will give me his daughter. My wife will present me with a family, who shall be well educated and they shall all have fine clothes and jewels suited to their rank. But suppose my wife forgets her duties and goes gossiping with the neighbours ! While she is away the children will be running about and will get under the cow's feet and be hurt. Aha ! there is my youngest hurt already. You silly woman, it's all your

fault ; did anyone ever see such a feather brain ! Well, you shall pay for it ; I will soon teach you to— ”

At this point Yagna Sarma took his stick and, brandishing it about, broke all the earthen pots. The butter, the milk, and the meal were all spilt on the ground, and down fell his house of cards. He sighed over his stupidity, and went home very much ashamed of himself.

“ How silly it is,” she continued when the story was finished, “ to build these castles in the air ! It is better to look to the present, instead of thinking of burdens which perhaps you will never have to bear.”

Deva Sarma admitted that she was right and that, after all, everything in this world is pre-arranged by Fate.

Meanwhile the time of delivery was at hand and a fine boy was born. The stars and all the omens were propitious. The mother passed the usual period of pollution, and on the eleventh day went out to take the ceremonial bath, at the same time warning her husband to look after the child and to see that nothing happened to him.

While she was out, Deva Sarma heard that the king was giving alms to Brahmans ; he could not resist the temptation, and accordingly hastened to the palace.

Now, this couple had kept a mongoose, of which they were very fond and had carefully fed with milk and butter. As there was no one at home to look after the boy, he entrusted him to the mongoose, telling him to keep an eye on the baby and to see that nothing happened to him, and warning him that he was responsible for the child's life. Then he ran off to the palace, received his share and hurried home, afraid that something untoward might have occurred, and uneasy that he had left him in charge of such a weak creature as a mongoose.

Now, it chanced that a big snake had taken up his abode in a hole in the Brahman's wall. Hearing no one about, he crept out and gradually approached the cradle. He was preparing to strike when the mongoose, who was watching, seized him by the throat and killed him. He then tore the body to pieces and, proud of his victory, sat down again by the cradle to watch, impatient to tell his master of his adventure. Very soon the Brahman came back. He was going at once to the cradle to see if any accident had happened while he was away, when the mongoose, hearing him come, ran out to meet him with every sign of joy, rolling at his feet and showing his delight in a hundred ways. But he was still covered with the blood of the fight with the snake, and the Brahman, seeing it, jumped to the conclusion that he had killed the child ; without further thought he

seized a stick and beat the poor mongoose to death on the spot.¹

But what was his grief when, on going to the cradle, he found the boy in a sweet sleep, while all round were the remains of the snake which the faithful mongoose had torn to pieces. He saw too late the fatal effects of his hastiness and realised that he owed the child's life to the mongoose which he had just killed.

While he was lamenting his crime, his wife came back from the river. She saw the mongoose lying dead at the door and on the other side her husband, who seemed to be plunged in grief. She was alarmed and asked him what had happened, whereupon he told her his fault and how he had killed the mongoose which had saved the child's life.

The wife heaped reproaches upon him. "Wretch!" she said, "your crime is worse than Brahman murder. Could anyone behave so thoughtlessly? A prudent man should always consider what he is doing; if you act too hastily or without looking ahead, you are sure to meet with disaster as the barber did."

There was once a merchant who lived at Vissalapura and had amassed a considerable fortune by hard work. His wife, after being childless for many years, was at last blessed by the gods

¹ Compare the story of Beth-Gelert.

and bore a son, but unluckily he was born under an inauspicious star which boded no good for him or for his guardians. Terrified by these bad omens, his parents resolved to abandon him and exposed him in the public way. But a poor woman happened to see him and, taking pity on him, took him to her house, brought him up and treated him as her own son.

By and by the boy grew up, and the woman then told him the story how he had come into her keeping. She often spoke to him of his father's wealth and of the luxury in which he lived, and said that he was the rightful heir, had it not been for the sins of a former generation which had caused his evil star and had induced his parents to abandon him.

This oft-repeated story made the youth melancholy. He heard that he was born to live in luxury and yet found himself actually living in penury ; he pictured to himself all he might have been and all he was. But one night he had a dream. He thought he heard a divine voice telling him that the old sins which had caused his sad re-birth were now forgiven and that thenceforward he should be happy. The way was shown how to be freed from his miserable condition. "To-morrow," said the voice, "you will call the barber to shave you, you will then go to the river to bathe ; on your return you will clean the house and make ready as for a great ceremony.

When all is ready, prostrate yourself before the Gruhadeva¹ and remain in meditation. Three beings like yogis will appear and ask alms of you. You will ask them in, will give them seats, and will then perform the usual sacrifices. After that you will give them something to eat. While they are eating, you will take the rice-pounder and strike them with it one after the other. As soon as they are dead, their bodies will turn into copper vessels filled with gold and precious stones ; take these vessels, and you will live ever afterwards in wealth and plenty."

Next day the orphan, whose mind was full of the dream, told everything to the widow. She was astonished at the extraordinary revelation and advised her son to do all that the voice had commanded. Next day the youth rose very early and sent for the barber, who, surprised at being called so early, asked whether there was any special reason for being shaved before sunrise. The orphan merely answered that there was an important ceremony in the house. He then bathed, cleaned the house with cow-dung and water, adorned the gods, and waited. Very soon the three yogis arrived and asked for alms. He received them politely, took them in and gave them seats, then made his sacrifice, and offered them flowers and incense. When all was over, he ordered food for them.

¹ Household deity ; cf. Roman Penates.

While they were eating, he fetched the rice-pounder and in the presence of his guests did worship to it ; then while they were still engaged, he took it up and with both hands struck each of them heavy blows on the head and killed them. At once their bodies turned into copper bowls filled with gold and gems, as the dream had predicted. Thus the youth became suddenly rich and soon forgot the days of his penury.

But the barber, who had stayed behind to see the ceremony in the house, was astonished at all this. When he saw that the dead yogis were turned into vessels filled with gold, he wanted to do the same thing, thinking that he too had but to kill three beggars to become rich. So he went home and told his wife all that he had seen, declaring that he had decided to do the same thing. But his wife opposed his plan. She told him that what he had seen was either an illusion or was brought about by special divine favour. It was foolish to run such dangerous risks without considering what might be the results. As for their poverty, that was as Fate decreed ; they ought not to try to better themselves by acts that might have fatal results.

But she could not move him. He was determined to murder three beggars in the hopes of growing rich, and accordingly on the day he had fixed he made all the arrangements as he had seen the orphan do, and then went out in search

of three beggars and took them to his house. Then while they were eating he dealt one of them blows on the head which killed him. But the others got up in terror and rushed away, crying out, "Traitor! Wretch! Is this the alms you would give us? Is this your hospitality?"

The barber waited for the dead man to turn into gold, but in vain. The corpse remained a corpse and his hopes were disappointed. Meanwhile, the other two beggars complained to the governor, who at once had the barber arrested and he was promptly executed.

Such was Deva Sarma's wife's story. "See," she said, "the risks you run through imprudence and what fatal results come from hasty action. How many ills we should escape if we never acted without careful consideration! Had you not given way to your anger, you would not have killed our faithful mongoose, to which we owe the life of our boy."

Vishnu Sarma ended his tale. "You see, my dear boys," he said, "the terrible results of imprudence and of over-hastiness. It is seldom that the imprudent man waits long before fatal consequences ensue. The wise man always reflects, and does not act till he has weighed everything."

ENVOI

WHEN all the apologues were finished, Vishnu Sarma's pupils were new men. No one would have recognised in these enlightened and polished men the same youths whose ignorance and vulgarity had made them a public laughing-stock. They were fully aware of the service which their teacher had done them in making them fit for their rank, and they continued to heap their thanks upon him.

Vishnu Sarma was proud of his success. He embraced his pupils tenderly, shedding tears of joy, and then took them to the king their father, who was overjoyed at their reformation. He was lost in admiration at the intelligence and the other good qualities of Vishnu Sarma, and heaped praises upon him for his great work. He then assembled all the illustrious Brahmans in the kingdom and, showing him his three sons, told them what Vishnu Sarma had achieved. The Brahmans, who had despaired of improving the princes and had blamed Vishnu Sarma for undertaking the impossible, were now astonished and not a little ashamed to see the change he had

wrought. They could not but admire the wisdom of those whom they had previously derided.

The king and his three sons once again thanked Vishnu Sarma and made him valuable presents of land and gold and jewels. And ever afterwards the princes assisted their father in the government, and they lived together for many years in peace and happiness.

THE END